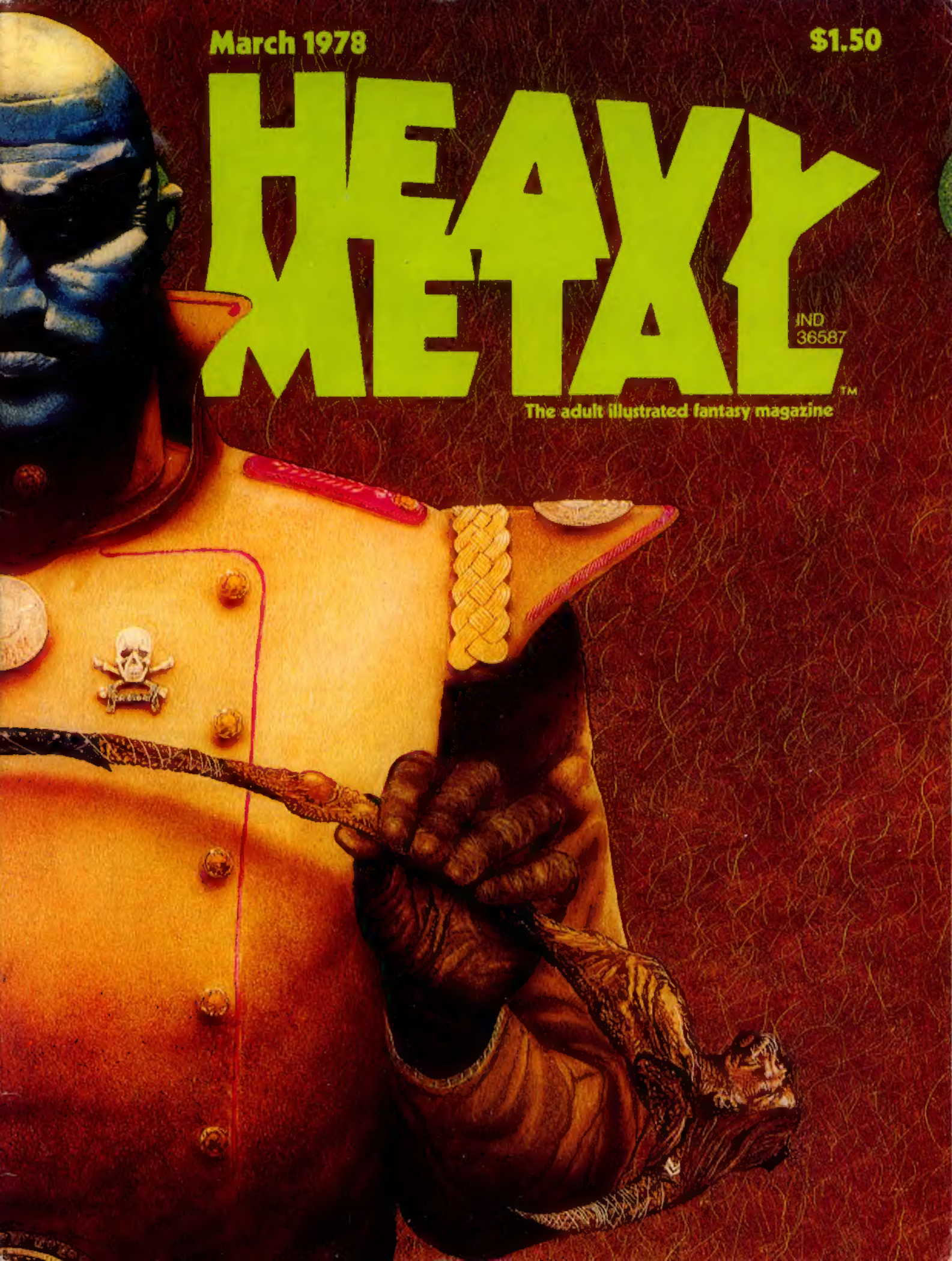
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Heavy Metal Vol. I, No. 12 March 1978

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Once a month, regular as estragon, one of us scubas into the great pile of manuscripts in Julie's office, wielding letter opener like oyster knife, pearl diving amidst the unsolicited manillas. This time, emerged dripping and triumphant with a painting & story we liked, & which (all praise the principle of indeterminacy) fit together perfectly. Hence story & picture *The Ruse*, to furnish our famous fiction section.

Those of you who still lust for revenge upon Germany for invasions of Zum Zum, Lowenbrau, & Poland will thrill to know that a German language edition of *Heavy Metal* is anticipated. We are also distributed in England, where the beautiful people now insist on their fish & chips wrapped in Moebius. *Metal Hurlant* appears in France, Belgium, & Spain. Makes one humble & yet in a way proud to feel part of gigantic, international malperception.

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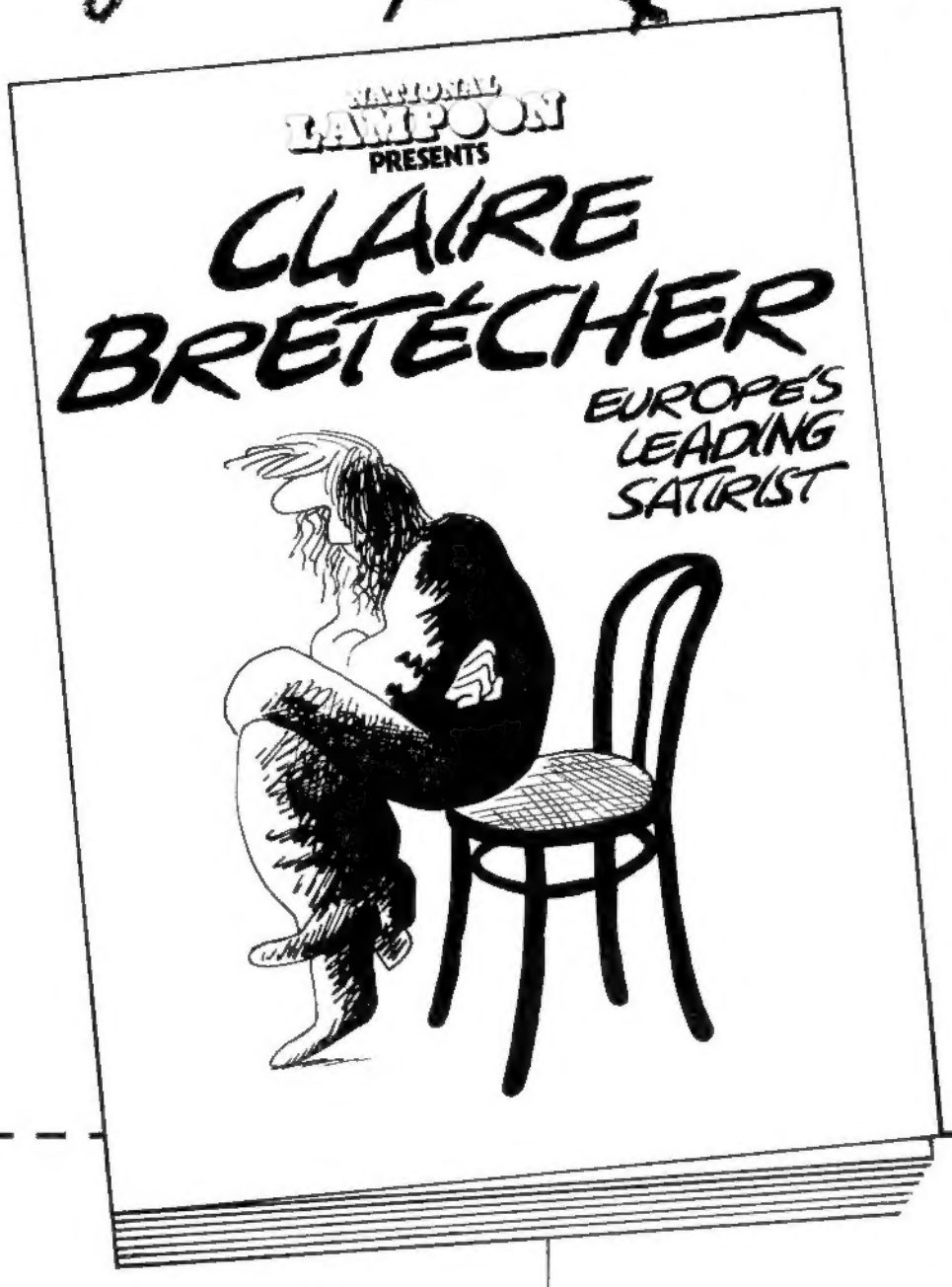
Claire Bretécher is a funny ~~lady woman~~ person!



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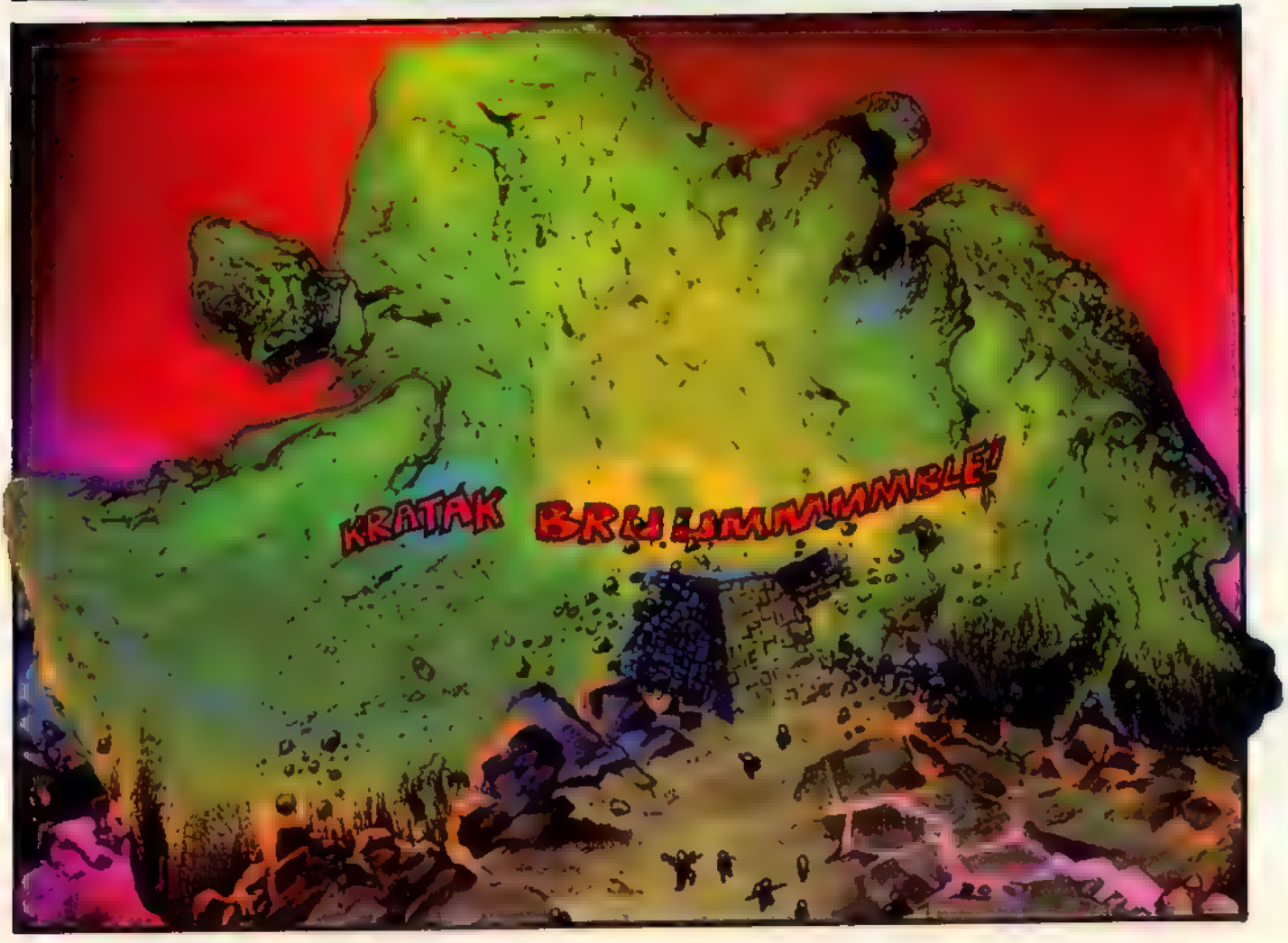
DEN
G-Great Uluhtc, h-here is your sacrifice.
Bring Kath forward and throw her.
©1977 RICHARD CORBEN

DEN!
What are you doing? No, no! DEN. . .
STOP! You're ruining everything.
I'll kill you with a blast of the Locnar's energy.
What th—
Give me that, you!
UNH! NO!

The Locnar is mine!
AAAAAHH!
RRRUMBLE!

YAAAAAAAAAAA


KRATAK BRUUMMMMMMBLE!

Oh, it's splitting the very earth.
RRRRRRRRRRR
Is this the end, Den? Are we doomed?
One last hope. . .
RETURN TO HELL, DEVIL!

Ooh. I can't see. What happened?
That explosion was beyond understanding. My ears are ringing.
Was the monster killed?
I'm not sure it can be killed... nor Ard either. But they're gone from this world.
What about the Queen?
She is probably dead.
We are alive and well. That's all I care about for now.
I thought I saw her mount a flyer.

THE END
RICK GRBEN

THE RUSE

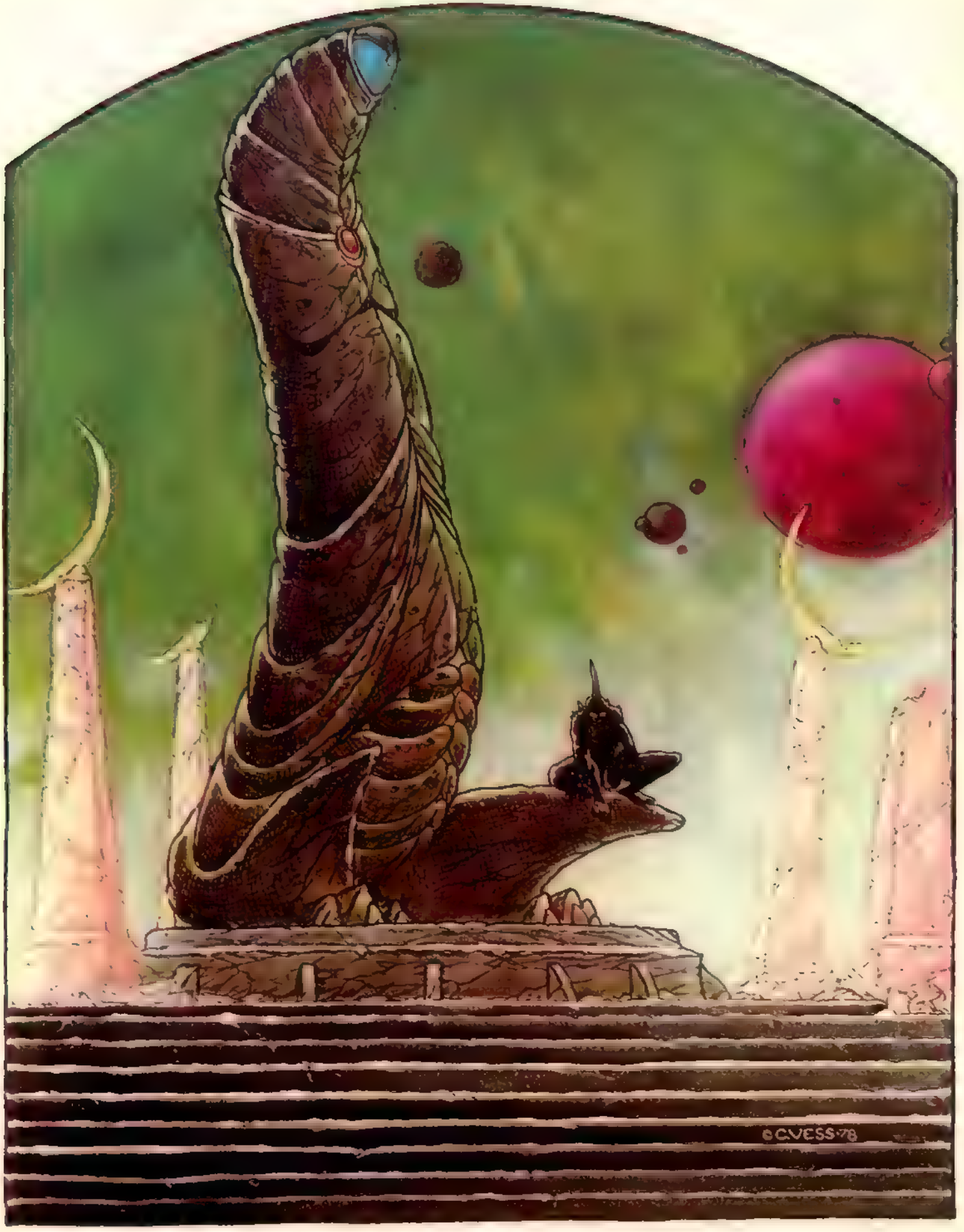
by Thomas Bridges

Leaves hung soaked with moisture, forming a ceiling of thick green that permitted only a safe amount of pale light to filter through. Underneath, in semi-shade, the ground was covered with fluorescent rot that expelled obnoxious odors, and kept only the most desperate or hungry from this unhealthy part of the forest. Everywhere there was the constant hum of small life the only loud sounds were the thrump of the feet of the father and son as they neared the end of the protective perimeter. Beyond was light-filled.

The father and beautiful son (which was how the father always thought of this adventurous child although there were other sons and daughters who were fine in their own right) were two days from their village into the thick decay of the old hardwood forest in the east. Starvation had driven them beyond the fragrant pines and into the rot to look for small game. Already, the father's gun had killed two fleshy corn lizards and several less meaty four-footers, which were now being dragged back to the village by the other members of the hunting party

The son moved in stride with the father the adventure filling him with so much wonderment that his father had to constantly remind him to remain alert. The boy tended to let his sensors drift, as he filled himself with the essence of green and damp warm and hum of life around him.

He was certainly unusual, this small boy. Mutant, some said, because he could sensitize completely he was capable of drifting into the essence of other life, in order to view his surroundings quite differently. Now he was the thick, shapeless gray creature that lay cautiously still off to their right, and as he perceived himself and his father as whiffs of acidy flavor and crackly noise, he realized that the creature was blind.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Back into himself, he wondered about his father's mind, though he never entered into it He had never been told not to, but, of course, they did not fully understand his capabilities. He didn't understand them himself, although his special sensitivity had been with him since birth.

Suddenly, his father's hand halted him. There was too much quiet in the forest.

"Down!" the father said, as he threw himself and the boy to the leafy forest floor. "A Ruse! Be absolutely quiet!"

The boy was desperate to look, and still too afraid to sensitize. The ferocity of the Ruse was legendary. And who had ever really come upon a Ruse? Their teeth hung only from the necks of magic men, his grandfather had told him. But his grandfather had never really seen one. Certainly, there had been more of them once than now, like everything else. In his father's childhood, he knew, there were still remains of protective walls surrounding villages, which had been built to keep the foraging creatures out. Only his father who had once hunted for the rich—was said to have seen a Ruse—and that was many years ago. (And his father was too full of stories for the boy to really believe him.) Once, his father claimed to have eaten some flesh reputed to be Ruse, and he spoke of the strength it gave him.

But now, the father slowly eased himself and the boy behind the protectiveness of a roarer bush, and, tenderly shielding his son's underdeveloped vision from the dangerous brilliance of light, directed the boy's squinting eyes to the openness of the rocky clearing up ahead.

There was the Ruse—its large head so barren of fiber, its rubbery skin so grotesquely smooth. Stretching its enormous bulk in the sun without fear of the light that could scorch the skin of both father and son in seconds, the Ruse's brown and blue muscular body vibrated softly as it shrieked its pleasure under the warming light. Finally, stretching itself into full view, it widened its fleshy mouth with large gulps of breath, showing its black throat and the three rows of magical, large spindle teeth.

Uncontrollably, father and son's breath pulsed; as suddenly, the Ruse perked, rising on awkward hinds to become offensively tall, broadening its sensitivity in all directions.

The small underbrush that surrounded them crackled and oozed from impulses, but the bitter aura of the roarer bush (to which only forest people are immune) forced the Ruse to draw back its sensors, and salivate with pain. Protective stink soon permeated the air, causing both father and son to vomit uncontrollably, until breezes carried the nauseating odor away. Now, certain that the bush would protect them, father and son blended their personal scent with the pungency of the thick forest air.

And soon, the Ruse was again shrieking in its pleasure. Almost comically, it would twist its lumbering body, suddenly perk and sensitize, and flip its tail across the ground. Then, warmed and glossed by the light, it would become sluggishly comfortable and less cautious.

In a whisper, the father explained to the boy that it was doubtless the Ruse's youth that allowed it to be lured into the open, where a mature Ruse would never linger alone. Light was known to dull their movements, causing them to sleep dangerously unprotected. Still, no Ruse was ever known to have been taken outright. Because of their size and ferocity, they had been trapped in deep pits and left to deteriorate before they were killed and their flesh stripped.

And the boy's consciousness drifted back to the days when there had been more than forest to live in. Now, only the rich lived outside the forest—in shelters, and out of the light. The presence of Ruse made him think about everything wonderful he had never known. It was better than the most fanciful dream he had ever imagined.

Of course, that was years ago, the father was saying, as the boy started to listen again. He doubted whether a Ruse had even been seen since then. And he was sure that no one had ever had as clear a view as they had now. Still, he would wait until the beast was near sleep before attempting a shot. They had no reason to fear, he said, but he reminded the boy that they would have to stuff their ears with something, for the screech of a dying Ruse would penetrate the soul of even the most insensitive human. He could remember, he said, even to this moment, the echo of its cry after that killing so long ago.

By now, the boy had new thoughts about his father. There was even admiration in his pale eyes. Yes, he believed that his father had truly seen a Ruse before. He had been there at a kill. And, leaning close against his father's body, he was again tempted to see into his father's mind. But now he was more cautious. His father's new strength left his own abilities in doubt. He would wait, he thought.

While they waited in silence, the itchiness of staying still made the boy's sensors wander—often, of course, it was uncontrollable. He would simply phase out, and suddenly take on a new perspective. Sometimes, it was that of a tiny silent creature on a distant tree limb, viewing moving things below with complete detachment. Sometimes, it was some frantic mindless creature like that one in the nearby rocks, sensing every presence with fear. Even the sweet, colorless hanging flowers intoxicated his senses. Or he felt the tingling smoothness of slime on a nameless crawling creature and the curious electric impulses from a rounded fluff of body far away The boy had long since realized how easily he could be any one of things

His father, realizing his son was drifting, interrupted his play, reminding him to stay alert. And, although he said it was not yet time to attempt a shot, he stuffed his ears and the boy's with soft moss, for fear he would forget to do it later.

Silent and still again, the boy struggled to remain alert, but the temptation to let his sensors wander at will was great. There in a tree limb quite close to the Ruse, a curious slink moved to the edge of a branch. The boy sensitized and discovered that the creature was not in the least afraid of the Ruse, although it certainly recognized the awful odor.

Back in himself, the boy's attention was now fully upon the Ruse, who had become so sluggish and sleepy that it could barely flip its tail to scatter the small black things zipping in and out of the rocks and over its body. Its shrieks turned to murmurs as it entered sleep.

And the curious boy wondered about the essence of the Ruse. How marvelous, how legendary this creature was! And would he ever have another chance? It was certainly one of the last of its kind. And now it lay so passive—its great, shiny brown and blue bulk at ease in the light

Slowly the boy sensitized and filled himself of the Ruse He felt the most incredibly wondrous thing: warmth—something he had never before felt, because of the dangerous light. It made him tingle and float in joyous pleasure. He was the sleeping beast. And he had never known—nor would he ever again know -the experience of dissolving in the essence of pure, warm light.

Because suddenly a roar blasted the Ruse's brains into fragments, and his own mind exploded at the same moment. Only that hideous scream remained until he died, hours later, mindless and foaming at the mouth, in his father's stiffened arms. ●

CHAPTER TWO:

THE WINTER OF THE LAST COMBAT

BY MORA AND GARCIA

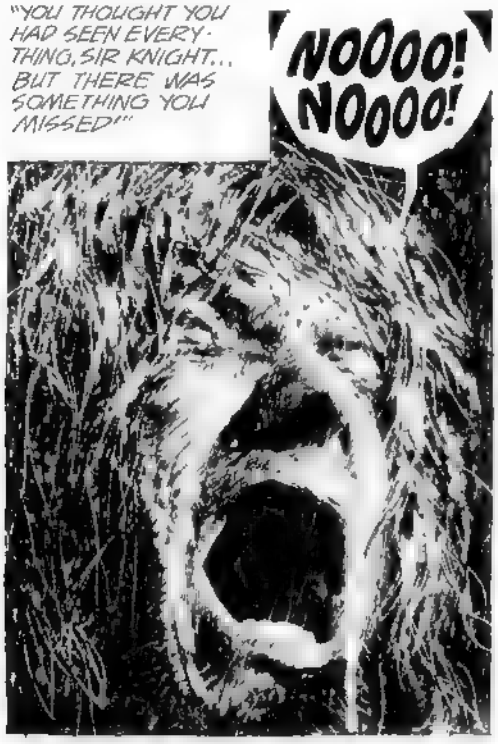
THE WOLVES HOWL WHILE THE SNOW FALLS. THE FIRE WARMS THE HEART, DOESN'T IT, LITTLE ONE? BUT YOU NEVER SPEAK. YOU ONLY SMILE. A WITCH YOU MAY BE, BUT YOU SLEEP LIKE AN ANGEL.

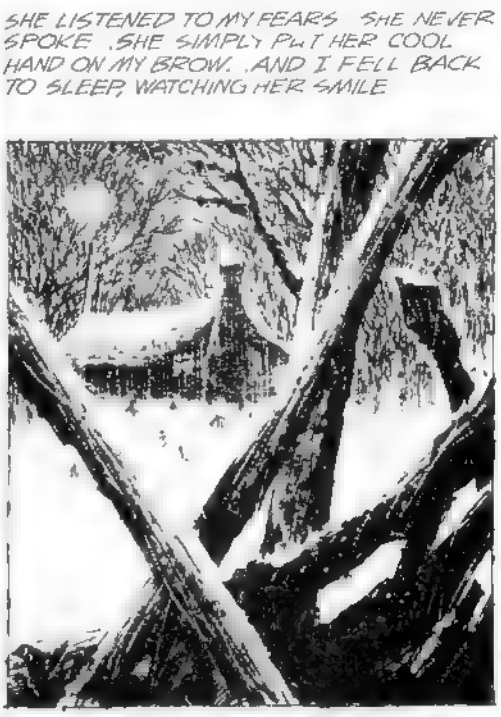
HAVING SEALED OFF THE ENTRANCE, I CAN NOW ALLOW MYSELF TO REST AS WELL. I BELIEVE THERE IS ONLY ONE DANGER WHICH CAN THREATEN ME TONIGHT. FEVER! I AM TREMBLING ALL OVER!

ELEANOR! ELEANOR! I'M COMING TO YOU, MY LOVE, MY BELOVED. NOTHING HAS CHANGED SORROW AND THE BLACK DEATH HAVE SPARED US... WE WILL BE HAPPY AGAIN.

WHAT. WHAT IS THAT LAUGHTER? ELEANOR! ELEANOR!

A BEING WANDERING ACROSS SPACE AND TIME IN SEARCH OF HIS IDENTITY. NOW HE IS A CRUSADER RETURNING FROM THE HOLY LAND, DISGUSTED BY MEN AND THE GOD IN WHOSE NAME THEY PILLAGE AND MURDER. TOGETHER WITH A CHILD HE HAS SAVED FROM THE STAKE, HE IS ON HIS WAY TO FIND THE LADY HE LEFT BEHIND.





SATAN! WITCHES! A PLAYFUL CHILD IS WHAT I HAVE BROUGHT WITH ME! AT THE EDGE OF THE FOREST YOU SUDDENLY COVERED MY EYES WITH YOUR GENTLE HANDS AND I HEARD SOMETHING WHICH I HAD NOT HEARD FOR A LONG TIME MY SELF LAUGHING!

ELEANOR! ELEANOR! I'M COMING TO YOU!... THE ARMED MEN WHOM I LEFT TO PROTECT YOU LET DOWN THE DRAWBRIDGE, RECOGNIZING THEIR MASTER...
NOTHING HAS CHANGED, NOTHING! I WOULD ALMOST LIKE TO THANK THE GOOD LORD!
MY LOVE, MY BELOVED! NOTHING HAS CHANGED SORROW AND THE BLACK DEATH HAVE SPARED US WE WILL BE HAPPY AGAIN.
IT'S IT'S JUST AS I WAS IN MY BAD DREAM BUT NO! IT IS YOU ELEANOR! IT IS YOU, MY OWN TRUE LOVE!

ONCE AGAIN, MY BODY NEXT TO YOURS, MY LIPS TOUCHING YOURS.. ONCE AGAIN, LIKE A FLASH OF LIGHTNING, OUR YEARS OF YOUTH, OUR LOVE THEN AND OUR LOVE NOW AND IN THE FUTURE ARE LIKE AN ETERNITY OF HAPPINESS HELD WITHIN A FEW SECONDS! I HAVE NEVER FELT ANYTHING SO WONDERFUL. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE? WHAT IS HAPPENING?
THERE WAS A TERRIBLE SCREAM! AND THEN SOMETHING SMASHED AGAINST MY HEAD
ELEANOR! WHERE... WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE AM I?
I HAD NEVER SEEN THIS GRAVESTONE BEFORE I SWEPT THE SNOW OFF THE STONE... AND I READ THERE WHAT I FEARED!

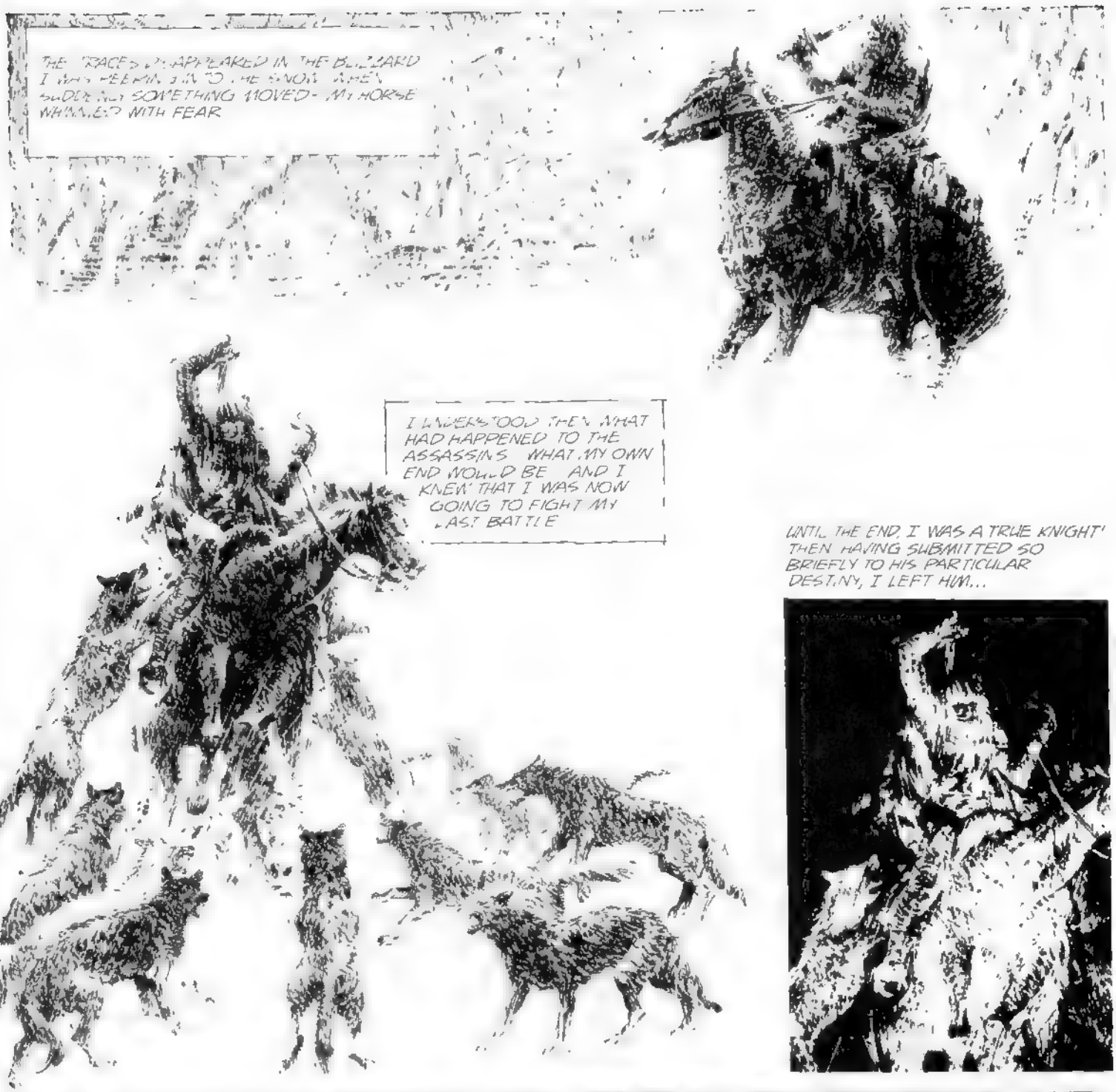
AN ILLUSION! YET ANOTHER DREADFUL EFFECT OF THE FEVER!... AFTER MY DELIRIOUS FIT, I STOOD FOR SEVERAL MINUTES WITHOUT UNDERSTANDING, BEFORE THAT GRAVESTONE, AMONG THE RUINS WHICH THE CROWS SURVEYED. THEN I REMEMBERED THAT TERRIBLE SCREAM AND I RAN

POOR CHILD! HER FACE WAS UNTOUCHED AND SHE STILL HAD THE SAME SMILE. NOT EVEN DEATH HAD MANAGED TO ERASE IT!

AT [illegible] I GALLOPED ONTO MY HORSE AND FOLLOWED THE TRACKS OF THE ASSASSINS ACROSS THE FIELD. THE ASSASSINS OF A POOR, INNOCENT CHILD

SATAN! WITCHES! THERE IS NOTHING EXCEPT MAN. MAN BATTLING AGAINST HIMSELF, AGAINST OTHERS, AGAINST THE WORLD. MAN QUESTIONING HIMSELF ETERNALLY ABOUT WHAT IT ALL MEANS

I WAS GOING TO KILL THEM! I WAS GOING TO KILL THEM AND ALL THE WHILE I WOULD FORGET THE DEATH OF MY DEARLY BELOVED, THE DEATH OF GOD, MY OWN DEATH, MY WHOLE LIFE'S DEFEAT


THE RACE DISAPPEARED IN THE BLIZZARD I WAS BEGINNING TO THINK THAT SUDDENLY SOMETHING MOVED- MY HORSE WHINNIED WITH FEAR
I UNDERSTOOD THEN WHAT HAD HAPPENED TO THE ASSASSINS WHAT MY OWN END WOULD BE AND I KNEW THAT I WAS NOW GOING TO FIGHT MY LAST BATTLE
UNTIL THE END, I WAS A TRUE KNIGHT' THEN HAVING SUBMITTED SO BRIEFLY TO HIS PARTICULAR DESTINY, I LEFT HIM...
A WITNESS WATCHFUL AND PASSIVE I HAD SURELY ENRICHED MY EXPERIENCE BY THIS END WHICH HAD BEEN AS UNKNOWN TO ME AS IT WAS TO YOU AND I BECAME YET AGAIN PART OF THE FABRIC OF DREAMS THE DREAMS OF WHICH HUMAN LIFE IS MADE WHAT WILL I BE WHERE WILL I BE NEXT?
PERHAPS YOU, YOURSELF WHO READ THE LAST WORD OF THIS STORY
FIN

CHAIN MAIL

Dear Sean.

Re: Mike Wagner's "personal complaint" (Chain Mail, *HM* #10) about the "brutal mutilation of Vaughn Bodé's 'Sunpot,'" I, as colorist, would like to submit a plea of "not guilty." It may surprise "Mr." Wagner, but Vaughn Bodé is *dead!* No one can replace him, and since he didn't color "Sunpot" before he died, the job had to be given to someone else. Those familiar with Bodé's later work will understand *why* "Sunpot" *had* to be colored. As for my part, I'm not Vaughn Bodé, but I came closer to capturing the coloring he used than anyone else so far. It should also be pointed out that whereas Bodé hand colored his *originals* with *dry marks* on *bristol board*, I was given *third generation photostats* to color with *Dr. Martin's dyes*, which would explain some of the *technical* differences. Finally, I would like to state that *most* of the color choices were actually taken from Bodé's "Bode Erotica" in *Cavalier*, of which I have quite a collection.

Sincerely,
Bruce D. Patterson

Sirs:

Has the winter's cold affected all of us? I speak of your December issue with sixty overlong pages of M. (Mlle.) Druillet's ink drawings has creative torpor set in with the sub-zero temperatures? Two pages of Moebius and sixty of a lesser talent? Your premier issues were fantastic, but the flow of ingenuity seems to have been shut off to the merest trickle.

You have drawings by Sole... is it possible to include some of his writings? Are you licensed to print Mandryka or Gotlieb or Petillot?

Heavy Metal is anxiously awaited each month at my house. Please don't let our longing turn to bitterness.

P.S. Is it possible to receive subscription information for *Metal Hurlant* and *L'Echo des Savanes* through you, inasmuch as the publications are allied with Les Humanoides Associés?

With relish,
R. Gomez

Dear R. You can reach ***MH*** *c/o Bud Plant, P.O. Box 1886, Grass Valley, Calif., Echo at 11 rue Portefoin 75003 Paris. Eds.*

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

HM #1/APRIL, 1977: With Space Punks, the first chapters of Corben's Den and Bode's Sunpot, an excerpt from the best-selling fantasy novel *The Sword of Shannara*, Harzak, and more. $4.00

HM #2/MAY, 1977: Introducing Roger, the paranoid puppet, Virgo, the cosmic maiden, Russian astronauts, Conquering Armies, the ultimate rock festival, while Harzak, Sunpot, and Den continue. ($4.00)

HM #3/JUNE, 1977: Features *Night Images*, poetry by Conan's creator, Robert E. Howard, with illustrations by Corben; Macedo's Rockblitz, the highly praised Shells, the first chapter of Davis's World Apart, more Den, Sunpot, and Harzak. ($3.00)

HM #4/JULY, 1977: Is a must for Moebius fans, with 12 pages of Harzak and his s/f spy saga, The Long Tomorrow, also the end of Sunpot, further adventures of Den, the psychic Nep Simo, and the horrible Gold Queen. ($3.00)

HM #5/AUGUST, 1977: In which the saga of Polonius begins, The Long Tomorrow concludes, World Apart and Den continue, all amidst talking plants, samurai, puppets, sex, and violence. ($3.00)

HM #6/SEPTEMBER, 1977: Galactic aztecs, cosmic cowboys, hysterical shrubbery, chemically-induced sanity, a Moebius space opera, more World Apart, Den and Polonius, plus a Roger Zelazny short story. ($3.00)

HM #7/ OCTOBER, 1977: Packed with knights, ladies, jet pilots, insanity, reincarnation, and other harmless pastimes. 10 pages of color Moebius, the Airtight Garage, Den and Polonius *redux;* and fiction by Theodore Sturgeon. ($3.00)

HM #8/NOVEMBER, 1977: With nine color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud, the conclusions of both Polonius and World Apart, ex-pugs, intellectual mollusks, birth and death stars, and a great new Harlan Ellison story — the heaviest *Heavy Metal* yet! ($2.00)

HM #9/ DECEMBER, 1977: This time, went up to 104 pages to bring you the complete saga of Druillet's anti-hero, Vuzz, a chapter from *Close Encounters of the Third Kind*, and Fortune's Fool by Chaykin and Wein, in addition to full color contributions from regulars Corben, Macedo, Claveloux, and Moebius. ($2.00)

HM #10/JANUARY, 1978: We got Morrow to illustrate Zelazny, we got Lob and Pichard to update Ulysses, we got Meehan to do a *Heavy Metal* calendar girl, we concluded Conquering Armies and continued Den. Of course you *knew* about the Incas, fog lights and the time warp. ($2.00)

HM #11 / FEBRUARY, 1978: Wherein begin the new adventures of Barbarella, naked to her enemies and nude to her friends, and of Urm the Fool in his quest for revenge. Wraparound cover and center spread by Nino. A trip to Venus, the Crusader and the Witch, and Moebius down the rabbit hole. With the usual unusual, like Den. ($2.00)

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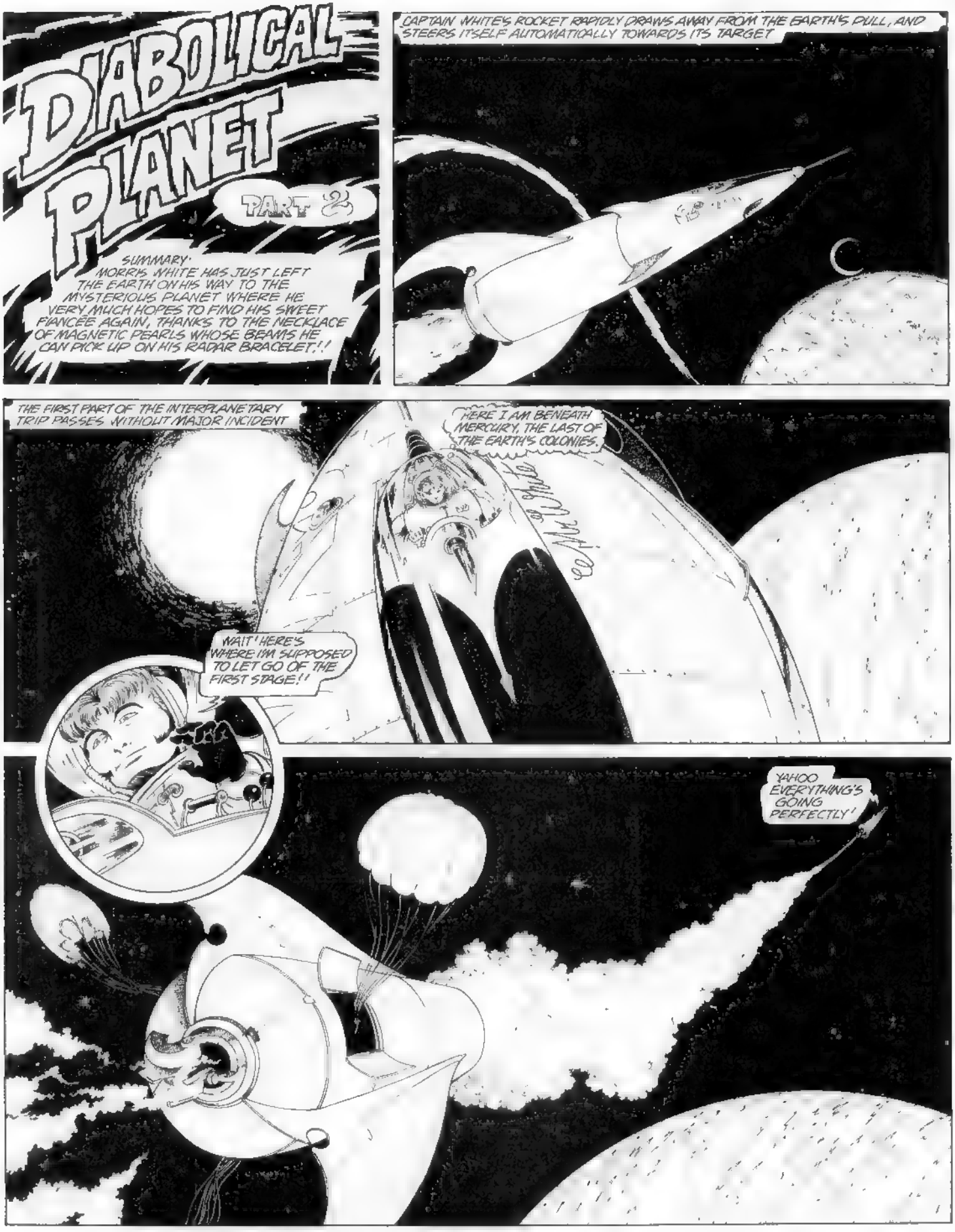
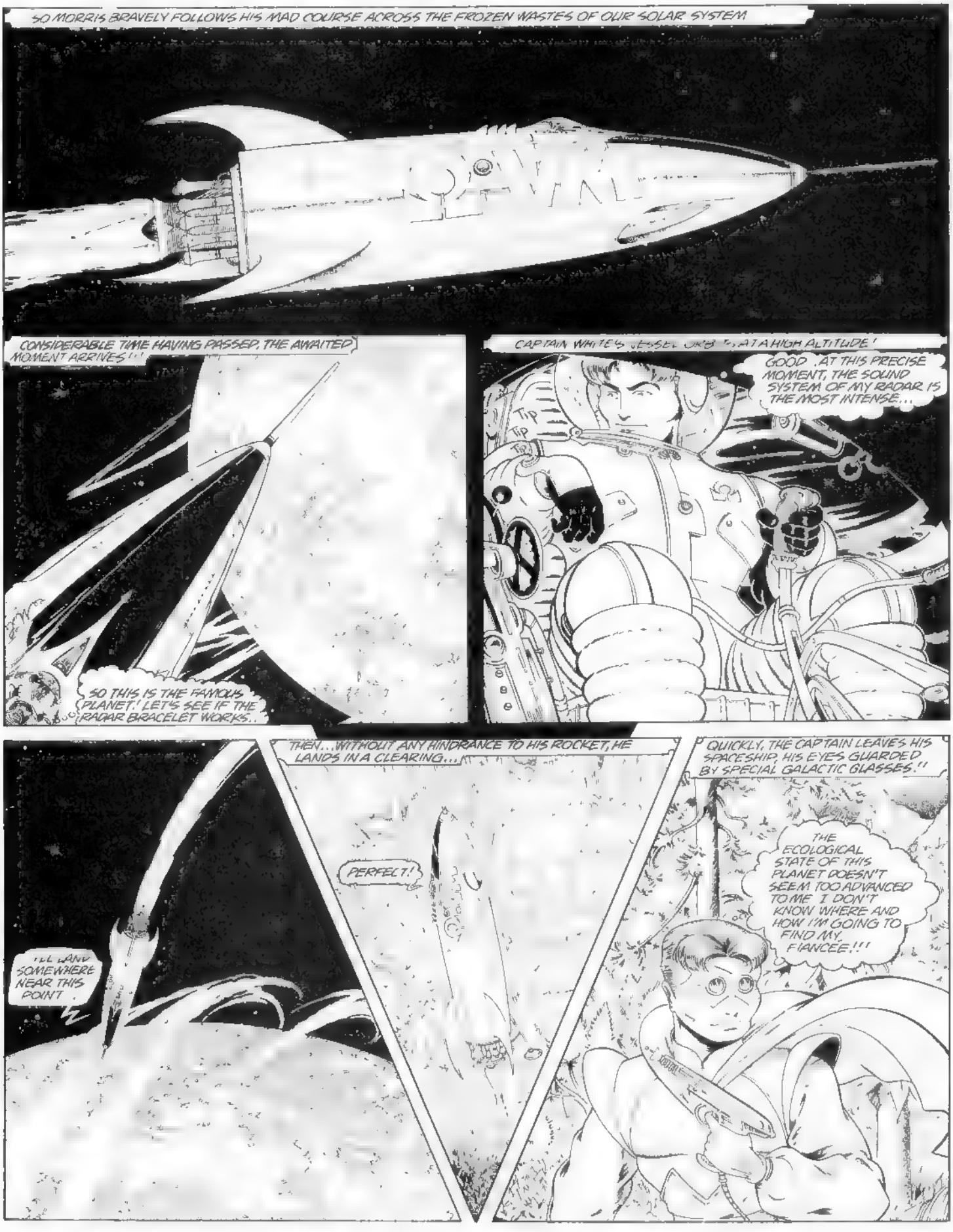

DIABOLICAL PLANET
PART 2
SUMMARY:
MORRIS WHITE HAS JUST LEFT THE EARTH ON HIS WAY TO THE MYSTERIOUS PLANET WHERE HE VERY MUCH HOPES TO FIND HIS SWEET FIANCÉE AGAIN, THANKS TO THE NECKLACE OF MAGNETIC PEARLS WHOSE BEAMS HE CAN PICK UP ON HIS RADAR BRACELET!!
CAPTAIN WHITE'S ROCKET RAPIDLY DRAWS AWAY FROM THE EARTH'S PULL, AND STEERS ITSELF AUTOMATICALLY TOWARDS ITS TARGET
THE FIRST PART OF THE INTERPLANETARY TRIP PASSES WITHOUT MAJOR INCIDENT
HERE I AM BENEATH MERCURY, THE LAST OF THE EARTH'S COLONIES.
WAIT! HERE'S WHERE I'M SUPPOSED TO LET GO OF THE FIRST STAGE!!
YAHOO EVERYTHING'S GOING PERFECTLY!


SO MORRIS BRAVELY FOLLOWS HIS MAD COURSE ACROSS THE FROZEN WASTES OF OUR SOLAR SYSTEM
CONSIDERABLE TIME HAVING PASSED, THE AWAITED MOMENT ARRIVES!!
SO THIS IS THE FAMOUS PLANET! LET'S SEE IF THE RADAR BRACELET WORKS..
CAPTAIN WHITE'S JESSEL ORB IS AT A HIGH ALTITUDE!
GOOD. AT THIS PRECISE MOMENT, THE SOUND SYSTEM OF MY RADAR IS THE MOST INTENSE...
I'LL LAND SOMEWHERE NEAR THIS POINT.
THEN...WITHOUT ANY HINDRANCE TO HIS ROCKET, HE LANDS IN A CLEARING...
PERFECT!
QUICKLY, THE CAPTAIN LEAVES HIS SPACESHIP, HIS EYES GUARDED BY SPECIAL GALACTIC GLASSES.!!
THE ECOLOGICAL STATE OF THIS PLANET DOESN'T SEEM TOO ADVANCED TO ME. I DON'T KNOW WHERE AND HOW I'M GOING TO FIND MY FIANCEE!!!

GUIDED BY HIS RADAR BRACELET, MORRIS NOW WALKS ALONG A DESERTED ROAD.
AND AT THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE FOREST, MORRIS DISCOVERS...
A FANTASTIC CITY--I SHOULD HAVE EXPECTED IT!
MORRIS PUTS AWAY HIS ELECTRONIC PISTOL AND INTRODUCES HIMSELF TO THE GUARDS...
UMMM. MUST ACT CASUAL..
I AM EDMUND KRUP FROM EARTH COME TO SEE MY FRIEND VON RICKTUS!
ZIH. TIH YOUR FRIEND VON RICKTUS IS IN A CONFERENCE WITH THE PLANET COMMANDER HE'LL SEE YOU LATER... ENTER...
LONG LIFE TO ALL METAL CREATURES!
WOW! HERE I AM... YET. THESE ROBOTS ARE NONE OTHER THAN THOSE WHO WERE SENT FROM EARTH SEVEN YEARS AGO TO EXPLORE THE SOLAR SYSTEM AND WHO NEVER RETURNED
SO HE STROLLS AROUND THE BUSY PARTS OF THE CITY...
SO THAT DREADFUL VON RICKTUS IS STILL ALIVE! HE MUST HAVE ALLIED HIMSELF WITH THE INHABITANTS OF THIS PLANET. HA! THAT RAT!
DISTRACTED BY HIS THOUGHTS, MORRIS CROSSES THE STREET.
CAREFUL!
THE CAR STOPS ALMOST ON TOP OF HIM.
WHAT?
HEY HUMANO, WHY DON'T YOU WATCH WHERE YOU'RE GOING?

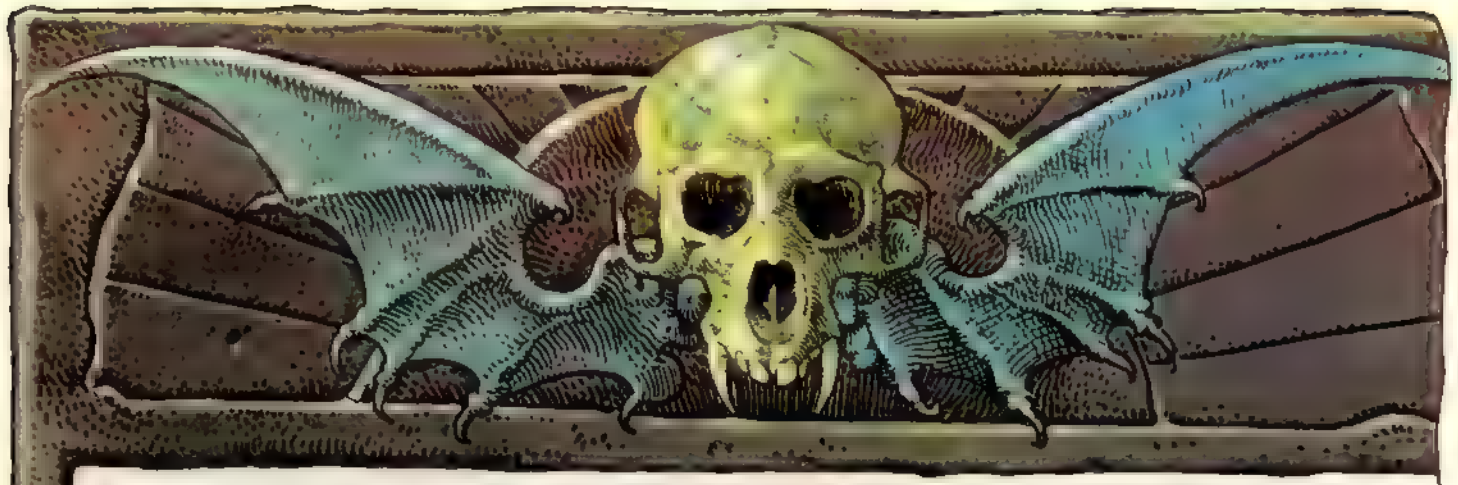
BY THE BURNING FUSE OF THE COMMANDER ! YOU WEREN'T PAYING ANY ATTENTION ; IT WASN'T MY FAULT ! YOU HAVE TO LOOK BEFORE CROSSING THE. .
SHUT UP ! TAKE ME TO VON RICK'HS AND DON'T TRY ANY TRICKS OR I'LL ELECTRIFY YOU !
YOU CAN'T SEE HIM NOW ; HE'S IN A CONFERENCE !
WHO CARES ? I JUST WANT TO VISIT HIS LITTLE HOME !
THE "SILVER DART" STOPS IN FRONT OF A LITTLE VILLA TUCKED AWAY IN A NEW PART OF TOWN
YOU'D BETTER LOOK OUT IF YOU'RE FOOLING ME, FISH MAN !
REALLY.. THIS IS IT !
ALRIGHT, DODO. IT'S SAFER THIS WAY !
THEN MORRIS HEADS FOR THE ENTRANCE...
ACTIVATING THE COMMUNICATOR ON HIS RADAR BRACELET
SHE . SHE'S HERE...IN THIS VILLA !
TIP TIP TIP
HIS HEART BEATING, HE THROWS OPEN THE DOOR WHEN SUDDENLY..
HEECCK HEECK !
BY ALL THE PLANETS ! WHAT SORT OF CREATURE ?

WHHHAAA? GET BEHIND ME, SATAN, OR I'LL..
AEECK!
I'LL BE COMPLETELY DONE FOR UNLESS I
.. I AIM TRUE, AND EMPTY A GOOD VOLLEY INTO HIM WITH SCRACH!!
THERE, THE BEAST'S DEAD!...
HEY! WHO'S THERE? IS THAT YOU, VON RICKTUS?!?
HEY! WHO'S THERE? ANSWER ME!
IS THIS INNER VOICE I SENSE THAT OF VIOLETTA? BY ALL THAT'S HOLY IN THE SOLAR SYSTEM, I MUST GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS!
VIOLETTA, MY LOVE, WHAT ARE YOU DOING IN THERE?
AT LAST! I HAVE COME TO SAVE YOU! COME ON, THIS IS NO TIME TO TAKE A SWIM!
HELLO! HAVEN'T I SEEN YOU SOMEWHERE BEFORE?...ON ANOTHER PLANET...MAYBE. WHO ARE YOU?

WHO AM I? OOOH! YES, I GUESS THESE GLASSES HIDE MY FACE... I AM..
MORRIS! MY CAPTAIN YOU'VE COME TO SAVE ME!
HOW ARE YOU GOING TO DO IT, MY POOR SWEET LOVE? EVER SINCE THAT EXPEDITION WHEN VON RICKTUS MADE ME SUBMIT TO HIM, I CAN ONLY BREATHE IN WATER... LIKE A FISH!!!
A FIS... FISH!!! OOH! MY SWEET THING, WHY?
I DIDN'T WANT TO BETRAY OUR LOVE. DO YOU UNDERSTAND?
UGHH! YES, CERTAINLY. WAIT, I'M THINKING.. I THINK...
HURRY THEN, VON RICKTUS COULD RETURN ANY MINUTE.
THAT I KNOW HOW TO GET YOU OUT OF HERE! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
CAPTAIN WHITE DASHES FROM THE VILLA, RUNS TO THE CAR AND...
WEARING THIS HELMALING OF A FISH MAN, SHE MIGHT BE ABLE, LIKE HIM, TO LIVE OUT OF WATER...
WATER... WA..
HURRY, SWEETHEART, PULL ON THIS HELMALING, AND YOU CAN LEAVE THIS PRISON!
YES, HURRY!!!

I CAN LEAVE THE WATER!... OHHH, MORRIS!
YOU'RE STAGGERING TRY A LITTLE HARDER! OH, SHE'S GOING TO FAINT...
YESSS. MY LEGS WON'T HOLD ME... I'M OUT OF THE HABIT OF WALKING!..OH!
FEELING BETTER NOW?
WHERE COULD I FEEL BETTER THAN IN YOUR ARMS, MORRIS?
EVERYTHING'S GOING TO BE ALL RIGHT, VIOLETTA! LET'S GO!
LOOK! A CAR - I'M SURE IT'S HIM!
WHITE, HERE! GREAT FLASHING SWORDS, HOW COULD HE ..
OH, YES, IT'S THAT PIRATE!
A SHORT, BUT DREADFUL DUEL FOLLOWS!
NOW I KNOW, DOCTOR, THAT TO WIN, I'VE GOT TO HIT YOU FIRST!
OUCCH!

DID YOU KILL HIM?
NO..IN SPITE OF MY RAGE, I JUST HIT HIM WITH A MINIMAL CHARGE, JUST ENOUGH TO STUN HIM, 'CAUSE I WANT HIM TO BE TRIED FOR HIGH TREASON AND OBLITERATE THE GOINGS-ON UPON THIS PLANET!
THE SILVER DART MAKES A DASH, LEAVING THE COMPOUND FOR THE NEARBY FOREST...
THEN...LEAVING THE CAR, MORRIS CARRIES HIS FIANCÉE TO THE ROCKET...
WITH THE POWER OF ITS AUXILIARY REACTORS, 'OMEGA-V-M' TAKES OFF FOR MERCURY.. BRAVO, CAPTAIN, THIS TIME YOU'RE THE WINNER!...BUT WILL YOU EVER MANAGE TO VANQUISH THE INHABITANTS OF THIS PLANET AND RESTORE TO VIOLETTA A NORMAL LIFE AGAIN?!?!?!
Ω·V·M
FIN
of this episode



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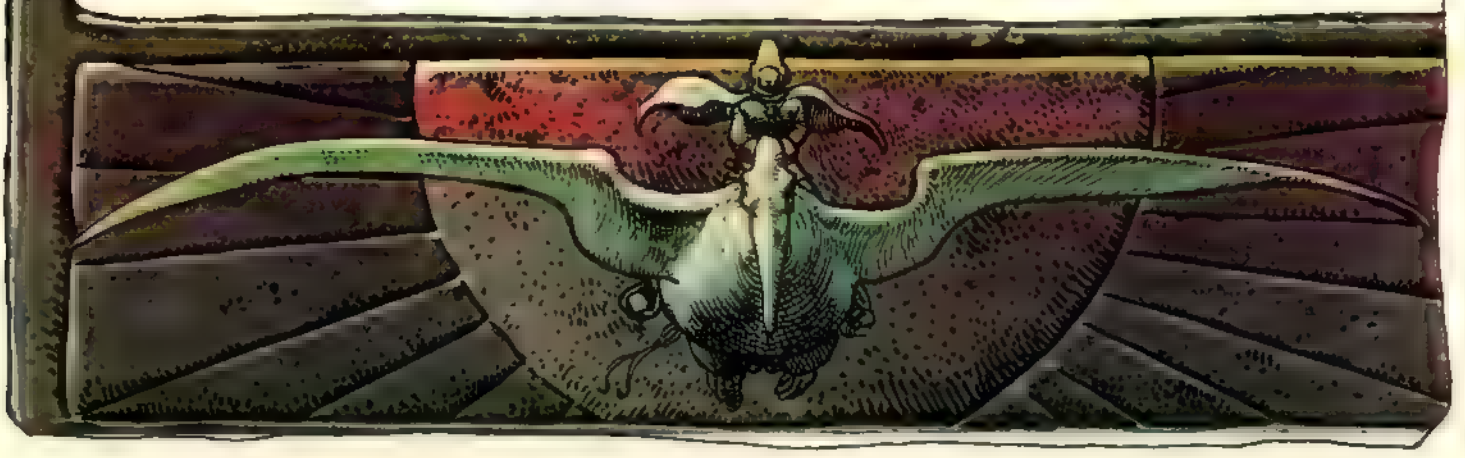
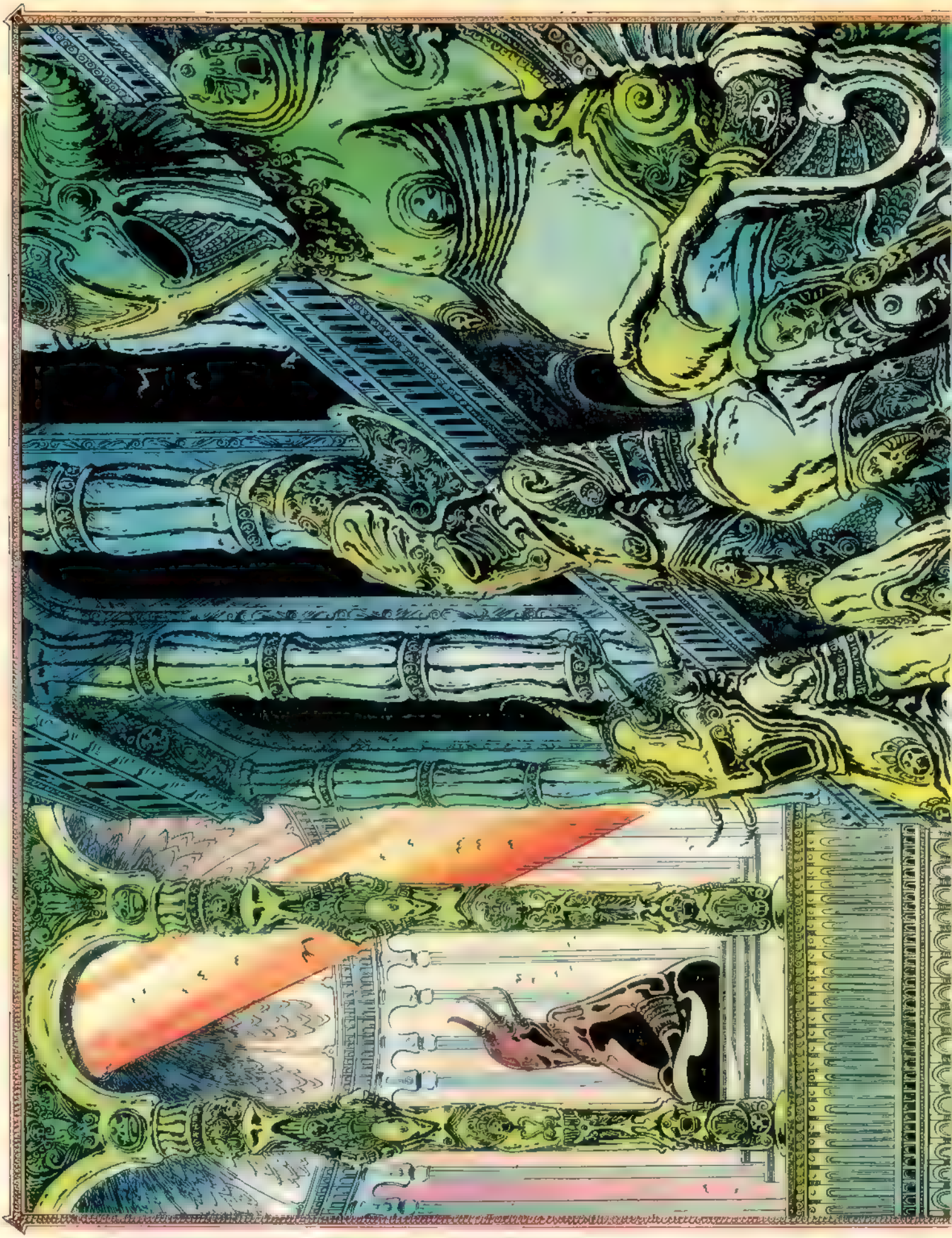
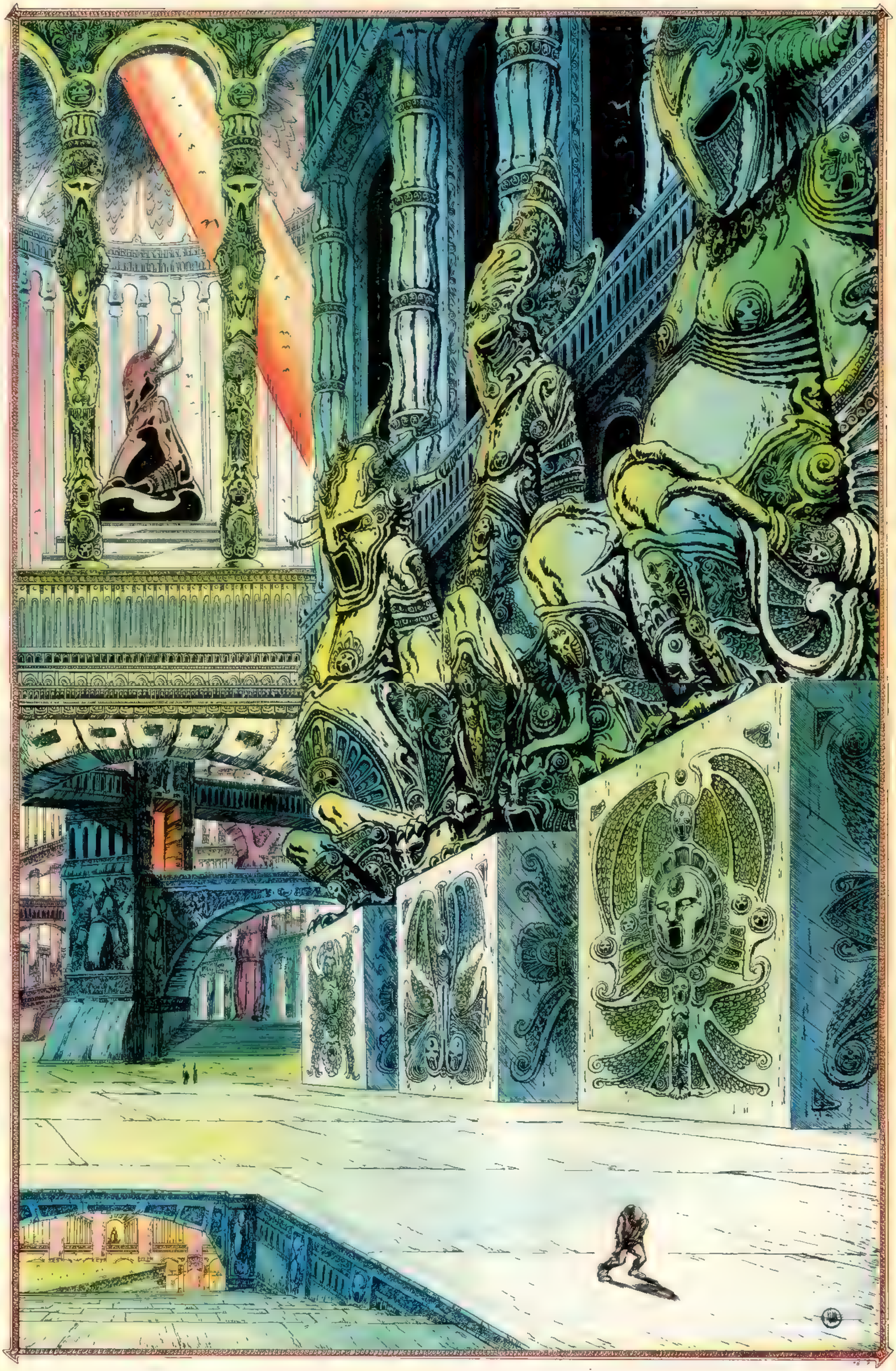


URM

GODS OF MY MASTERS, I LOATHE YOU!





UNLESS MY EARS DECEIVE ME — THESE GRATING RASPS AND HORRIBLE LAUGHS ARE OBVIOUSLY THE SOUNDS OF MY CRAZY MASTER'S FESTIVITIES!!
THE FEAST-- YOUR EARS ARE VERY SENSITIVE, URM, YOU HANDSOME FELLOW!
COME WITH ME
COME REJOICE WITH US
GREETINGS, OH DIVINE PRINCE...

COME CLOSER, DIVINE LORD, AND GAZE UPON THE JOY WHICH LIGHTS OUR FACES AT YOUR COMING

THAT BEAUTIFUL CHILD! I WANT IT! I WANT IT!
NO! I WANT IT! I WANT TO EAT IT!
LET'S SUCK HIS MARROW
AS YOU CAN SEE, WE ARE MOST APPRECIATIVE OF YOUR COMPANY.
AH, POOR URM, TRYING TO ESCAPE.. TONIGHT WE BEGIN THE HUNT OF THE HUNCHBACK! RELEASE THE DEAD WARRIORS FROM THEIR VAULTS AND WE WILL ALL JOIN THEM! URM..YOU WILL NEVER PASS BEYOND THE GATES OF THE BLACK CITY! NOW, THE GRAND NIGHT BEGINS!

AAAHHH!
AHHHH!
POOR HOWLING MADMAN, YOU FLEE DOWN THE ENDLESS STAIRS. BUT DEATH FOLLOWS YOUR EVERY FOOTFALL ACROSS THE COLD, DAMP STONES INTO THE GAPING MOUTH OF THE IDOLS, WHO SEEM TO TAKE YOU UP AMONG THEIR CORRIDORS...POOR URM, AND YET YOU HOPE AGAIN TO ESCAPE YOUR DESTINY...
TO BE CONTINUED...

HITCHHIKE
WHAT A BOSS RIG!
A LIFT, FINALLY!
WOW! YOU'RE WAY UP THERE!
GREAT TO BE ON THE ROAD!
NOT VERY TALKATIVE, ARE YOU? WE'VE BEEN ROLLIN' FOR AN HOUR AND YOU HAVEN'T EVEN TRIED TO PUMP ME!
YOU'RE GOING TO HAVE TO FILL IT UP. WE COULD TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE OPPORTUNITY TO..

YOU SHY OR WHAT?
MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE GIRLS, HUH? YOU A FRUIT?
IF I PUT MY HAND THERE, WHAT'LL YOU DO THEN, HUH?
AAIPPP!
PROONNNG!
EEEEEKKKK!
YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!
69
YOU AND THE TRUCK ARE... AAHHH!
SCHAPP!
THE SAME MACHINE...

LATER ..
666 DMG
FURTHER ON ..
OOOHHHH! I'M SO FED UP! BEEN WAITIN' HERE A WHOLE HOUR...AND NO ONE'S STOPPED!
HEY! A TRUCK...
ETCETERA...

GALACTIC GEOGRAPHIC

TALUS IV

Zoological Wonder at the Edge of the Galaxy

A Federation bio-collector filled with the spoils of its voyage hovers over marshy, cloud-covered Talus IV.

Baiting its feeder with heaps of food, the ship soon earns the confidence of the ray-like animals, which are seen here ripping loose bits of bait with their hooked tails. When they alight, the operator of the feeder platform will ingest live samples for transfer to the home planet.

The man-like beast in the foreground is actually the light sensitive end of a massive, segmented worm whose body descends into a deep water-filled crevice. The worms come to shore at nightfall to feed on glowing jell plants that dot the landscape. They rarely see light as brilliant as the Levilon beam, which is actually quite dim.

The red root-snakes, whose flexible bodies can extend to great lengths exhibit curiosity about the bio-collector. They appear to communicate with each other, exist in pairs, and seem to have a collective life cycle. Although firmly anchored to the wet ground, they move together at the end of their life cycle to form large rock-hard structures which become homes for lesser life forms. Scientists believe the root-snakes to have a high degree of intelligence, and have instructed the bio-collector not to collect samples until more can be learned about life in this remote system.

From the Stellar Journals of
KARL B. KOFOED

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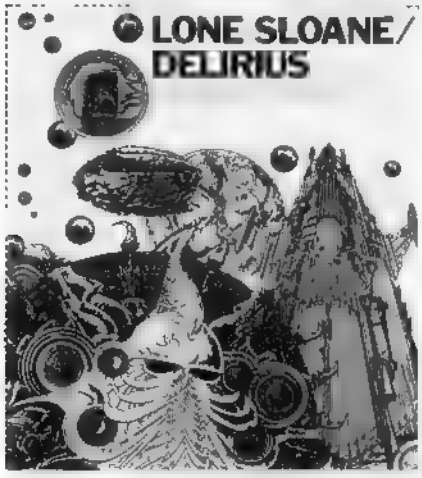

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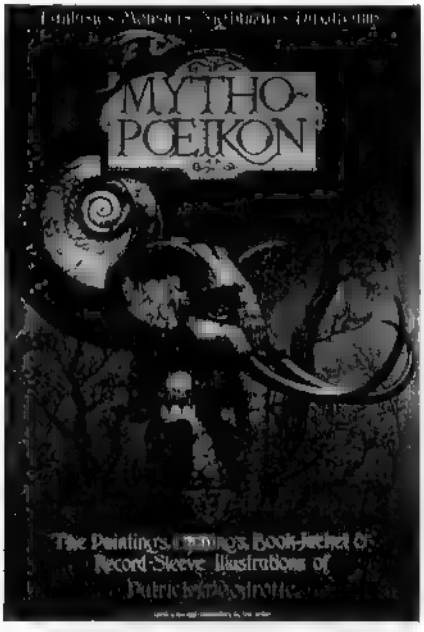

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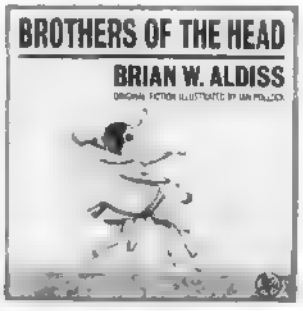

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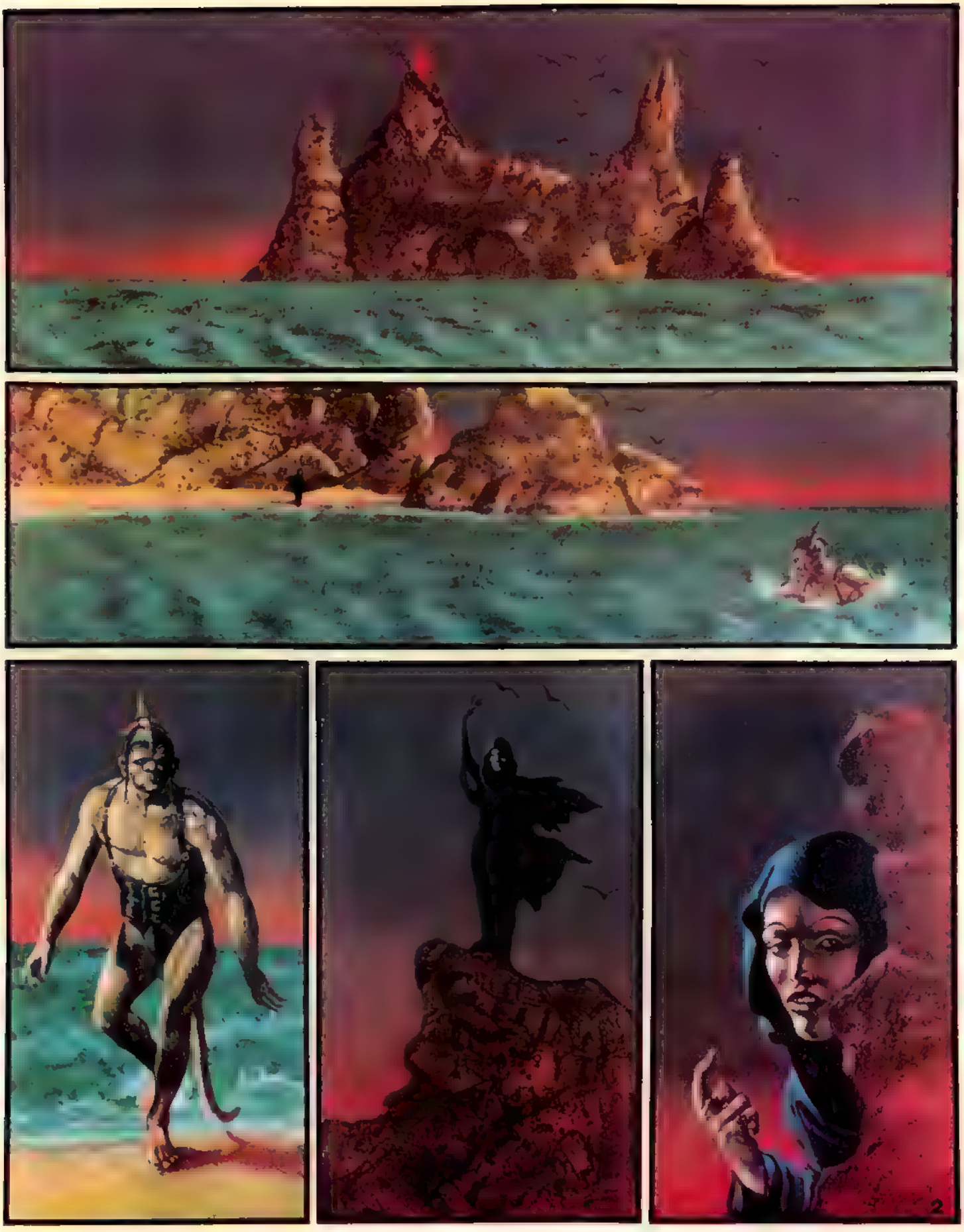
THE ABRACAX EFFECT

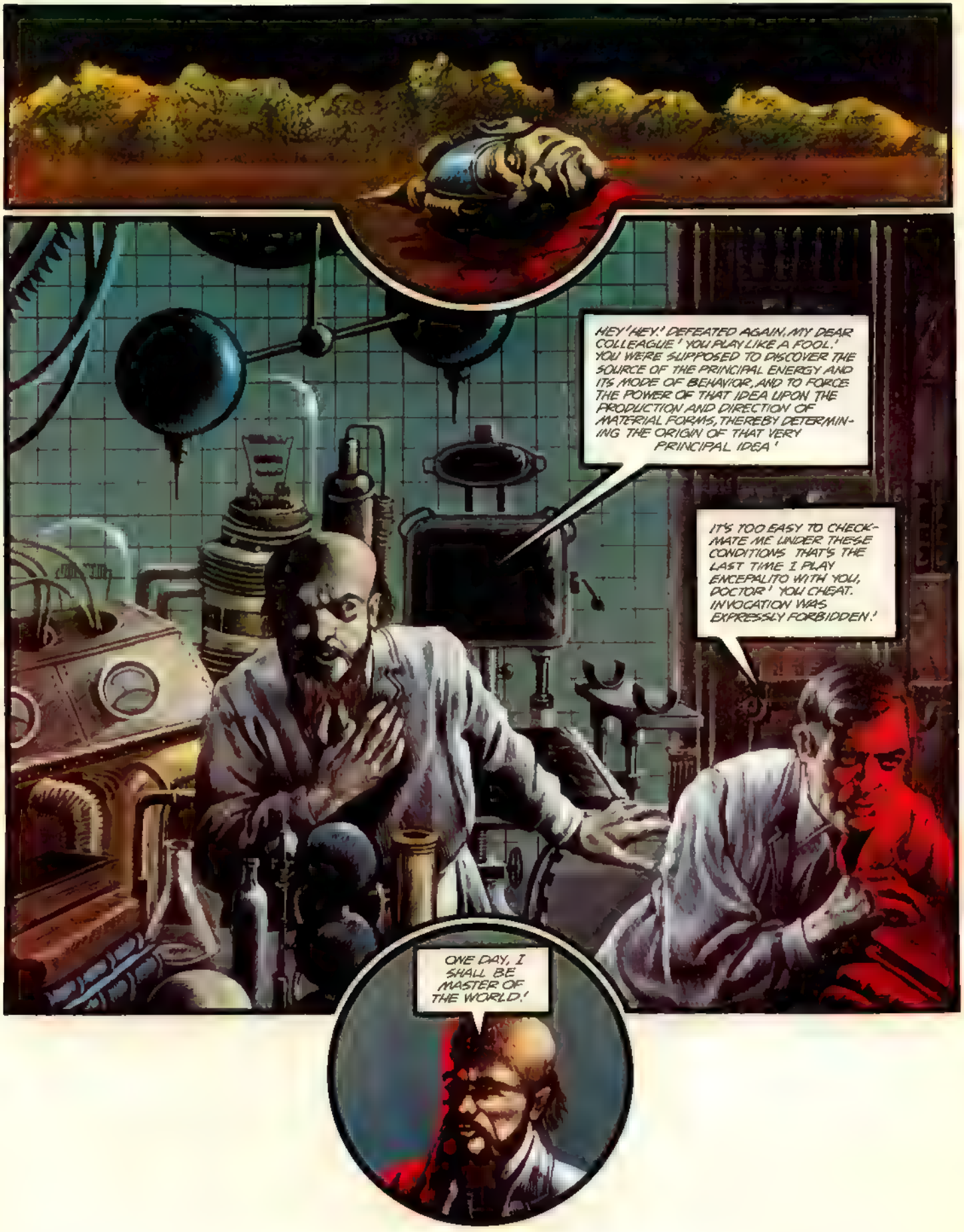

2

3

ELEMENTAL FORCES, ANSWER AS I CALL COME, I WISH IT, COME, I COMMAND IT !

SHOW YOURSELF AT ONCE! I CAN FEEL YOUR PRESENCE, OH FORCES OF FIRE. MAKE YOURSELF KNOWN! YOU ARE THERE. I SEE YOU!

ECCE HOMO ABRACAX !


HEY! HEY! DEFEATED AGAIN, MY DEAR COLLEAGUE! YOU PLAY LIKE A FOOL! YOU WERE SUPPOSED TO DISCOVER THE SOURCE OF THE PRINCIPAL ENERGY AND ITS MODE OF BEHAVIOR, AND TO FORCE THE POWER OF THAT IDEA UPON THE PRODUCTION AND DIRECTION OF MATERIAL FORMS, THEREBY DETERMINING THE ORIGIN OF THAT VERY PRINCIPAL IDEA!
IT'S TOO EASY TO CHECKMATE ME UNDER THESE CONDITIONS! THAT'S THE LAST TIME I PLAY ENCEPALITO WITH YOU, DOCTOR! YOU CHEAT. INVOCATION WAS EXPRESSLY FORBIDDEN!
ONE DAY, I SHALL BE MASTER OF THE WORLD!

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ORION
ORION'S WORLD IS NOT OUR WORLD BUT ONE OF WHICH THE STUFF OF FANTASIES AND LEGENDS ARE MADE. HIS ENEMIES AND CONFLICTS ARE WROUGHT OF DEMONS AND SORCERIES, MORE PALPABLE HERE THAN COMPETITORS OR TENSION AND FRUSTRATION. HERE POWERFUL DARK GODS COMMAND MEN'S OBEISANCE AND MAGIC THEIR BELIEFS. THE SECRETS OF SCIENCE ARE PRIVY TO BUT A FEW.... AND EVERYONE KNOWS THEY ARE QUITE MAD.
ORION'S NEVER-ENDING QUEST FOR THE SEVEN PORTALS TO THE SEVEN BRIDGES TO THE SEVEN STARS TO WHICH HIS FABULOUS SWORD, THORBOLT IS THE KEY BRINGS HIM TO ISHANDRIA AND THE RED HORSE INN...(A MYTHICAL BEAST TO ISHANDRIANS.)
THE STORIES OF YOUR TRAVELS ARE ALL LIES OF COURSE, ORION. BUT MARVELOUS LIES, NONETHELESS. WHERE WILL YOU GO FROM HERE BREAKING MY POOR HEART ?
YOUR LIES ARE PRETTIER YET THAN MINE, ASRA. THOUGH I'D MUCH LIKE TO BELIEVE YOU'D BE JUST A LITTLE SAD TO SEE ME GO, WHEN I LEAVE FOR BALIMODRA TONIGHT

BALIMODRA! TONIGHT! NOW I KNOW YOU LIE! NO ONE GOES TO THAT DREAD PLACE EXCEPT....EXCEPT.... OH!
AGRA, WHAT THE...??
AGRA, WAIT...WAIT! WHAT DID I SAY??
EXCUSE ME SIR, CRION IS IT NOT? LAMONTHOS IS MY NAME DO I UNDERSTAND YOU JOURNEY TO BALIMODRA?
WHAT?...OH, NOT TO IT, THROUGH IT, WHY?
A MOST FELICITOUS COINCIDENCE, SIR, AS I TOO JOURNEY TO KALDUS JUST ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE FURTHERMOST MOUNTAIN RANGE OF BALIMODRA. FORGIVE MY BOLDNESS, BUT MIGHT AN OLD MAN PRESUME TO HOPE THAT AN EXPEDITIOUS ALLIANCE BE MADE? SAFETY IN NUMBERS, YOU KNOW.
SAFETY?
PLEASE, I DO NOT WISH TO OFFEND CAN IT BE THAT YOU'RE UNAWARE....
THE MAID'S ATTITUDE MUST HAVE GIVEN YOU THE CLUE...AH NO, I SEE YOU DO NOT UNDERSTAND. BALIMODRA IS A DREAD LAND HARBORING NAMELESS TERRORS, RULED OVER BY MASTERS OF DARK ARTS AND VISITED ONLY BY OTHERS OF THAT SINISTER PERSUASION. YOUR FRIEND MISTOOK YOU FOR A WARLOCK!
AND YOU?
OH, I DO NOT SO MALIGN YOU, GOOD SIR. AS TO YOUR BUSINESS THERE I DO NOT INQUIRE. I MERELY PETITION YOU FOR PROTECTION AS FAR AS MY DESTINATION, FOR WHICH OF COURSE I WILL PAY HANDSOMELY.
A CUSTOM MORE VENERABLE EVEN THAN YOURSELF DOES NOT PERMIT REFUSAL OF SUCH A PETITION AMONG TRAVELERS, OLD ONE. MEET ME WITHIN THE HOUR AT THE STABLE BEHIND THE INN AND WE RIDE FOR BALIMODRA.
2

SOMETIME LATER, AS ORION HEADS FOR THE STABLES AND HIS APPOINTMENT WITH LAMONTHOS....

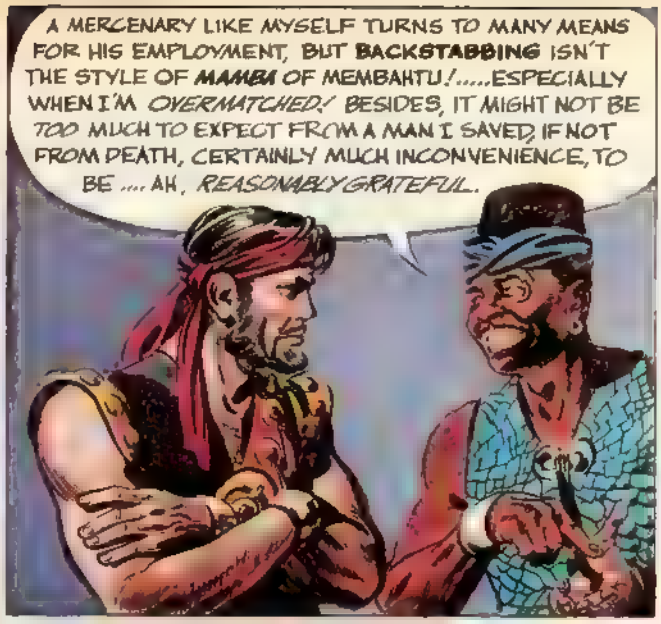
ORION BEWARE! IT'S A TRAP!!

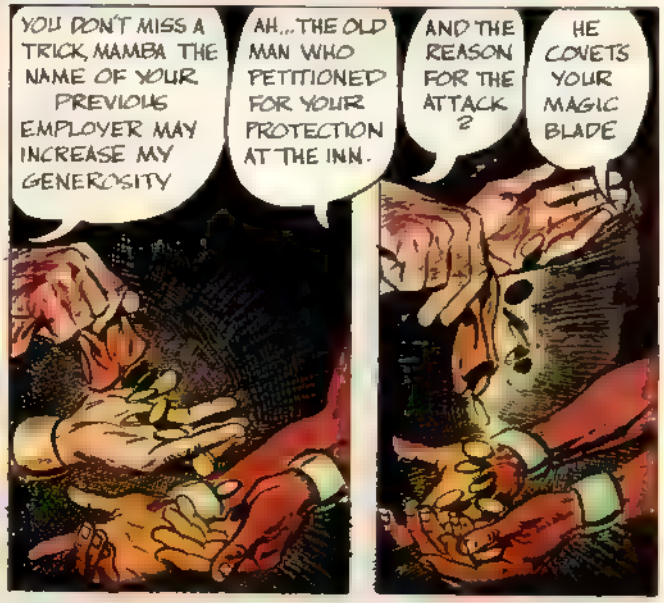
FROM APPARENTLY INNOCENT SHADOWS MENACING FORMS SUDDENLY MATERIALIZE AS ORION UNSHEATHES THORBOLT A BROODING RUMBLE AS OF DISTANT THUNDER CRACKLES ACROSS THE ELECTRIC TENSION, CAUSING THE ATTACKERS TO PAUSE INVOLUNTARILY, SOMEHOW LESS CONFIDENT NOW OF THEIR PREY

THEN THE FLICKERING SHIMMERING STAB OF SUMMER LIGHTNING ENGAGES STEEL AND THE BATTLE IS JOINED.

COLD STEEL PROVES TO BE NO MATCH FOR THE FLAMING BLADE OF ORION AND THE REMAINING ASSAILANTS, UNMANNED BY THEIR FRIGHT, BOLT IN ABJECT TERROR.

YOUR WARNING WAS TIMELY AND DRAMATIC, MY FRIEND. ALMOST AS IF IT WERE... ...CONTRIVED.
PEACE, ORION! WHAT A SUSPICIOUS MAN YOU ARE! NOT WITHOUT SOME JUSTIFICATION, HOWEVER. MY WARNING OF THE SKULKERS WASN'T MERE HAPPENSTANCE. I WAS HIRED SAME AS THEY TO WAYLAY YOU BUT I'D HEARD OF YOU AND THE THUNDER AND LIGHTNING OF YOUR BLADE, ...MY FORMER COMPANIONS HAD NOT!


A MERCENARY LIKE MYSELF TURNS TO MANY MEANS FOR HIS EMPLOYMENT, BUT BACKSTABBING ISN'T THE STYLE OF MAMBA OF MEMBAHTU!.....ESPECIALLY WHEN I'M OVERMATCHED! BESIDES, IT MIGHT NOT BE TOO MUCH TO EXPECT FROM A MAN I SAVED, IF NOT FROM DEATH, CERTAINLY MUCH INCONVENIENCE, TO BE .... AH, REASONABLY GRATEFUL.


YOU DON'T MISS A TRICK, MAMBA THE NAME OF YOUR PREVIOUS EMPLOYER MAY INCREASE MY GENEROSITY
AH... THE OLD MAN WHO PETITIONED FOR YOUR PROTECTION AT THE INN.
AND THE REASON FOR THE ATTACK?
HE COVETS YOUR MAGIC BLADE

THEN PERHAPS HE IS HIMSELF ONE OF THOSE HE PRETENDED TO WARN ME OF.
WHICH IS.... ?

A SORCERER!
AY YIII... WAIT!

WELL, NOW THAT YOU'VE COLLECTED ONCE TO TAKE MY LIFE AND ONCE TO SAVE IT, YOU OUGHT TO BE A TWICE-HAPPY MAN.
I'LL BE A **THRICE**-HAPPY ONE TO PUT SOME **MILES** BETWEEN ME AND THAT SORCERER. THEY HAVE UNPLEASANTLY IMAGINATIVE WAYS OF REPAYING A BAD TURN!
WELL, GOOD LUCK AND—
HOLD!
AH, MY DEAR ORION! CAN IT BE THAT YOU'VE FORGOTTEN OUR AGREEMENT, SIR?
YOU'VE VOIDED ANY CONTRACT BETWEEN US, OLD ONE. STAND ASIDE!
AS LAMONTHOS GESTURES OMINOUSLY, ORION CUES HIS MOUNT AND THE BEAST LEAPS, CLAWS FLAILING . .
AH ME, IT APPEARS THIS SCURRILOUS RASCAL HAS POISONED YOUR MIND AGAINST ME. DEPENDABLE KNAVES ARE SO HARD TO GET THESE DAYS. I'LL HAVE TO TAKE MATTERS INTO MY **OWN** HANDS.

THE RENDING TALONS SHRED HARMLESS PLUMES OF SMOKE AS LAMONTHOS MAKES A HASTY AND UNCONVENTIONAL EXIT ..

ORION AND MAMBA PUT SOME DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM-SELVES AND THE SCENE OF THEIR ENCOUNTER WITH THE MAGICIAN BUT.....

WE HAVEN'T SEEN THE LAST OF HIM, I FEAR.

OOOOWEE! LOOK WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I TRY TO BE A GOOD SAMARITAN. NOW I CAN'T GO BACK AND ITS **SUICIDE** TO GO FORWARD.

I'M SURPRISED **YOU** HAVEN'T DEVISED A WAY TO COLLECT YOUR OWN REWARD

THE SOLDIERS WON'T FOLLOW ME TO BALIMODRA BUT LAMONTHOS IS SURE TO HOUND US BOTH. BETTER THE UNCERTAINTIES OF THE BLACK RANGES BEFORE US THAN THE SURETY OF THE COMBINED FURIES OF THE CUCKOLDED COMMANDER AND HIS SCORNED WIFE, I THINK. WHAT SAY YOU ORION, TO A **CONTINUANCE** OF OUR CHANCE ALLIANCE?

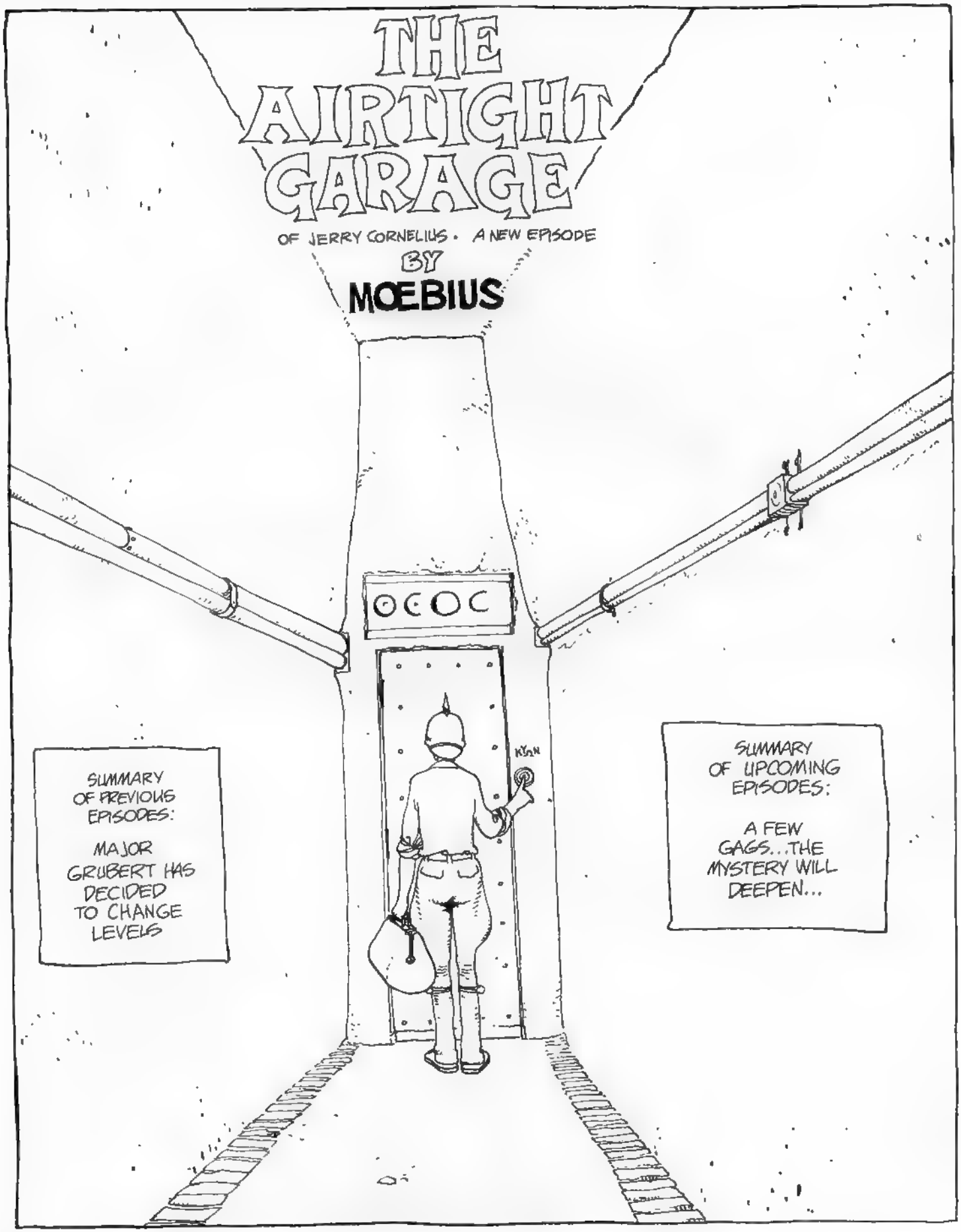
WHY?

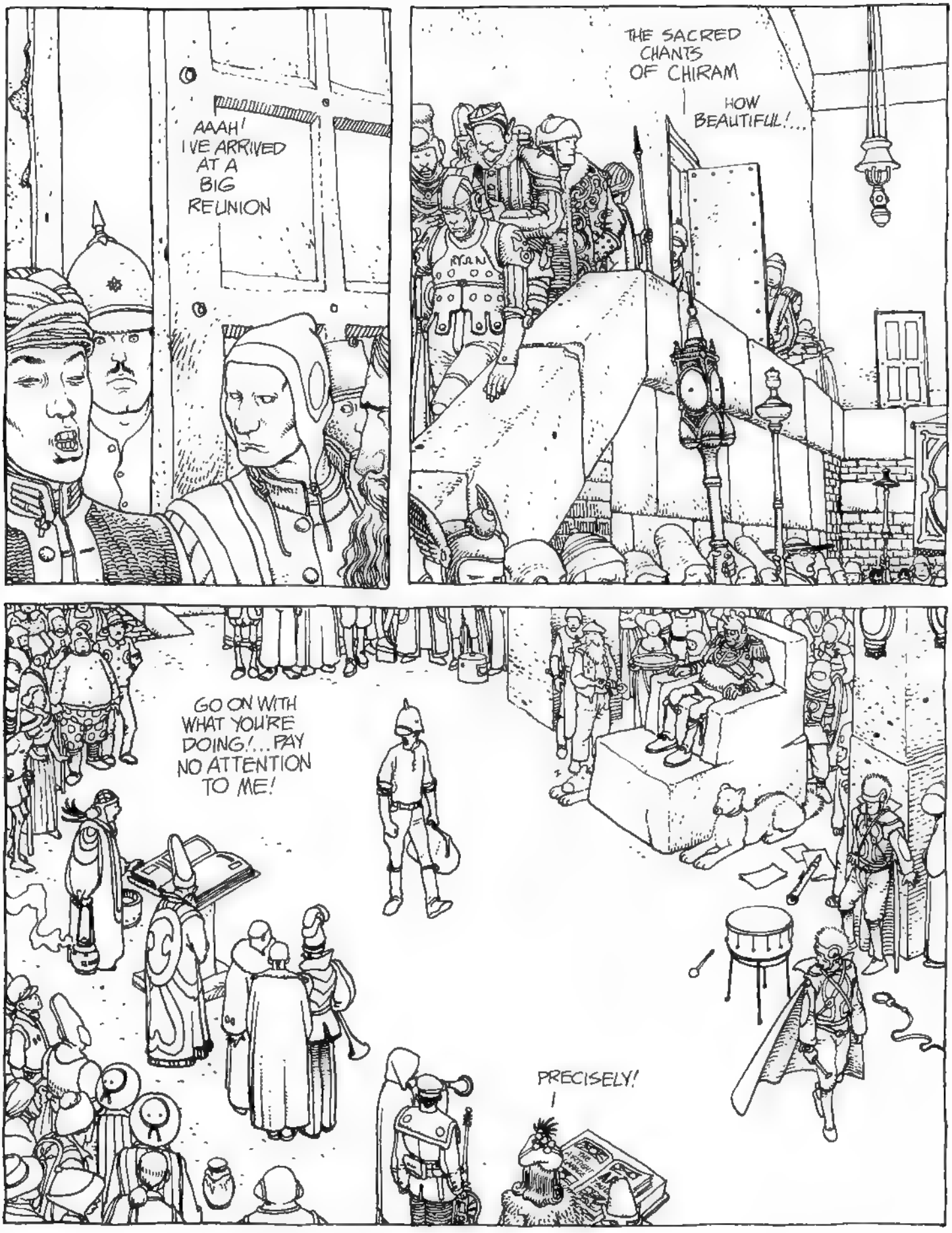
I DESERTED FROM THE ARMY POST AT BASARAK. FOOD WAS BAD AND PAY WAS WORSE. THE COMMANDER'S WIFE **HATED** TO SEE ME GO. I SUSPECT THE COMMANDER SUFFERED **MIXED** EMOTIONS. THEY'LL HAVE FLANKETED THE AREA WITH SEARCHERS AND REWARD OFFERS. THE ONLY WAY **IN OR OUT** OF ISHANDRIA FROM HERE IS THE ROAD LEADING TO BALIMODRA AND BASARAK GUARDS THE PASS.

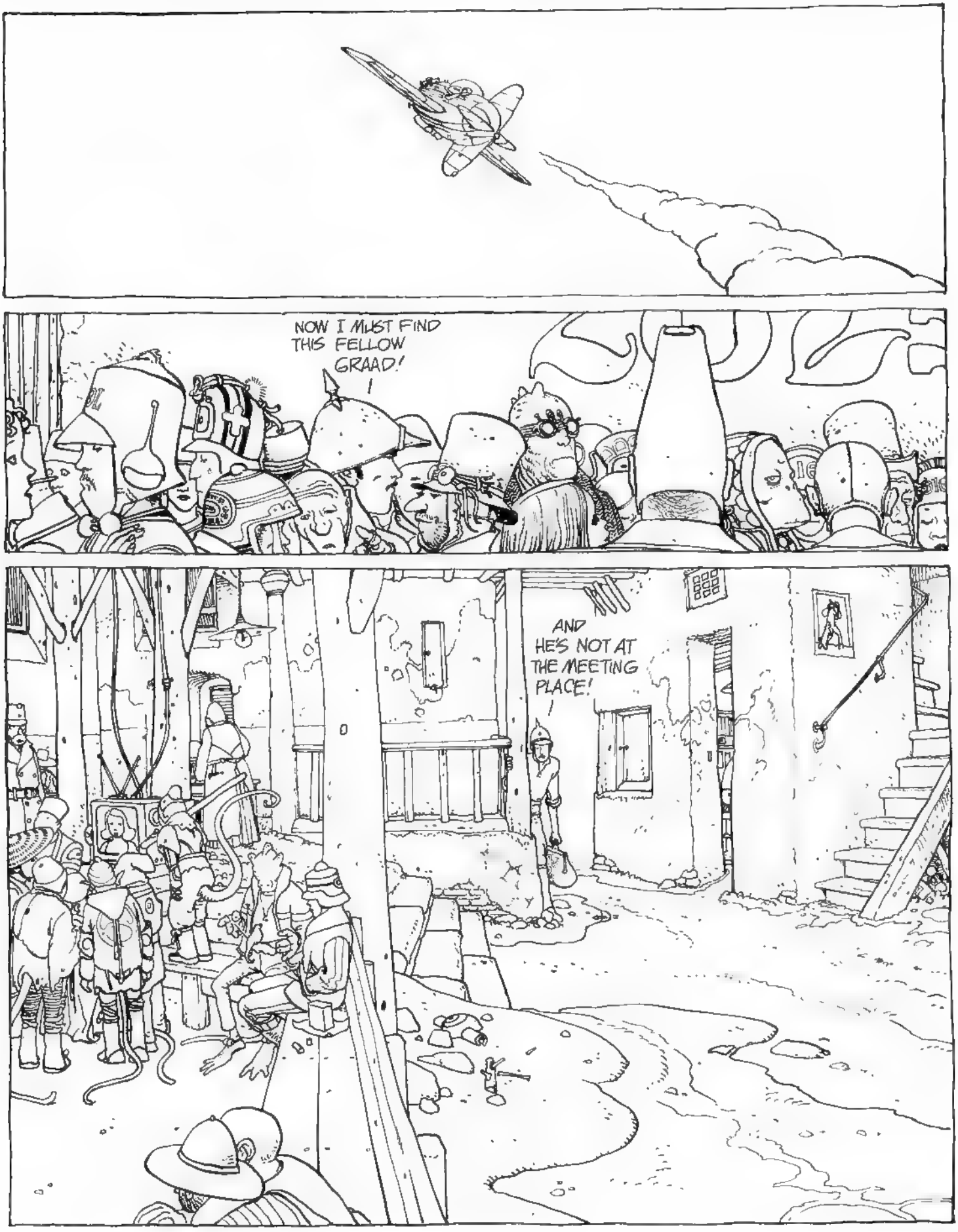
AND SO IT WAS THAT ORION THE WANDERER AND MAMBA THE MERCENARY MET AND BEGAN THEIR STRANGE ADVENTURES ON THAT FATEFUL NIGHT AT THE RIM OF BALIMODRA.... BLEAK BROODING BALIMODRA WHERE MAMBA AND ORION FACE — AH, BUT THEN THAT IS YET **ANOTHER** TALE.....

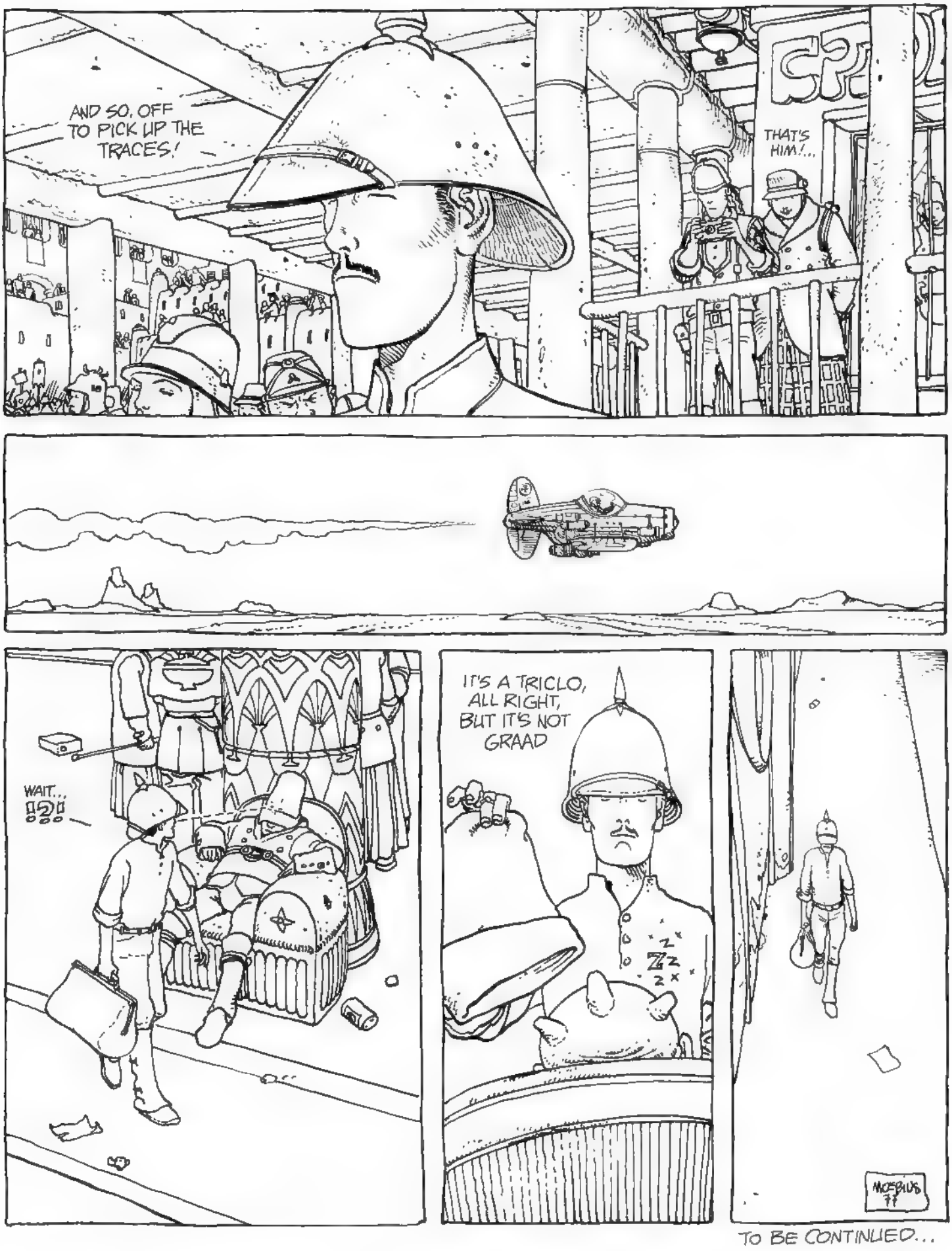
...WHICH BEGINS HERE, IN THE SHADOWED VALLEY OF XANSRA...
AHHHH, SEE, MY PRETTIES... I PROMISED YOU DIVERSION, DID I NOT?

THREE FOOLS IN CONFLICT OVER THE KEY TO THE UNIVERSE. A BRIGAND, A ROGUE AND A SORCERER WHOSE ARTS PERHAPS RIVAL MY OWN. THE POOL DOES NOT SHOW THE OUTCOME... ONLY THAT IT WILL BE RESOLVED HERE, IN THIS VALLEY OF ETERNAL NIGHT, AND THAT.....
.....MANY WILL DIE! I THINK THAT I SHALL LOOK FORWARD TO THE COMING OF.....
...ORION!


THE AIRTIGHT GARAGE
OF JERRY CORNELIUS • A NEW EPISODE
BY
MŒBIUS
SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS EPISODES:
MAJOR GRUBERT HAS DECIDED TO CHANGE LEVELS
SUMMARY OF UPCOMING EPISODES:
A FEW GAGS...THE MYSTERY WILL DEEPEN...


AAAH! I'VE ARRIVED AT A BIG REUNION
THE SACRED CHANTS OF CHIRAM
HOW BEAUTIFUL!...
GO ON WITH WHAT YOU'RE DOING!... PAY NO ATTENTION TO ME!
PRECISELY!


NOW I MUST FIND THIS FELLOW GRAAD!
AND HE'S NOT AT THE MEETING PLACE!



TO BE CONTINUED...

1996

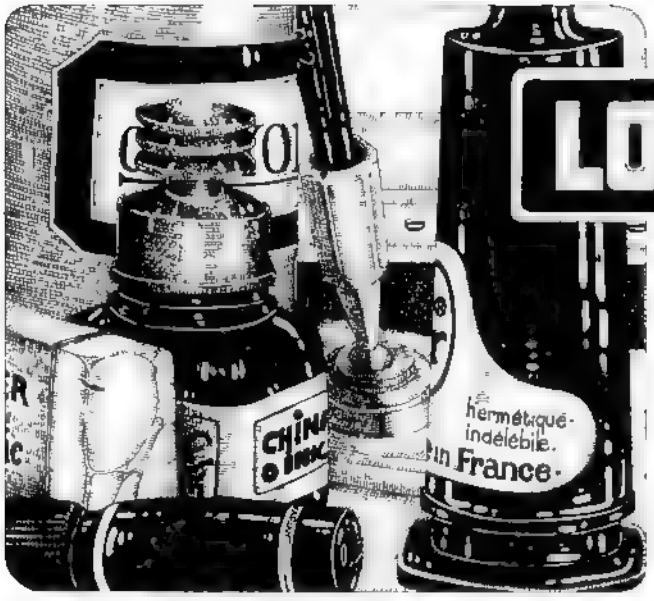
THE MOST BEAUTIFUL WRECKS AND REMAINS
THADZ WEERD! WUDZ A NIZE STADJEW LIGE THAD DOIN INNA PLAZE LIGE THIZ?
O, ARE FIRM THINGS PREZENDAJUN N STILE ARE REEL IMBORDAND...
!
WE TRY TO KEEB THA AMBIENDZ NIZE FORA KUSDUMERZ.
JUZ TRRIFIG !
REEL IMBREZIY!

AN ANJIL AN ALL EEZ ST.VZ AROUN'
YEZ. .TH STADJEWS ARE REEL POBLAR WITHA PUBLIG...THEY GIVE THA PARG SUM KLAZ...KYNDA RELIDJUS...PEEBUL CUM TA BRAY INA RUNES... DONCHA THING THERE PRIDDY, MIZDER?
CHEEZ, YAH!
NOW IVYUL FOLLUME TUTHU SEGON PARG, WEEL FIN WUDCHA WAN...
D.24
THIZATHU SEGJUN FUR REEREN GOLLIZJUNS..
EXIT
HEER WEYAR!

TAYGA LUGA ROUN?
YAH.. SHUR...
TAYGYER TIME...
BUD THEEZ KARZ ARN REKD ADOLL !
JUSINA BAG!
OH! RIDE!
TRIFFIG! TRIFFIG! JUS LIGE NEW!
CAN I TRYEM OUD? ?
YEAH, SHURE

KREEEK
?
WUD TH FUG?
IDZ... IDZ..
HEY, LAYDEEEE!
LUGS LIKE .. I MEEN.. SUMBUDDY LEF SUMPIN LIGE...
WUDZAD?
THEREZ...
...
UH...
!
UH KARGUZ!
TO BE CONTINUED...

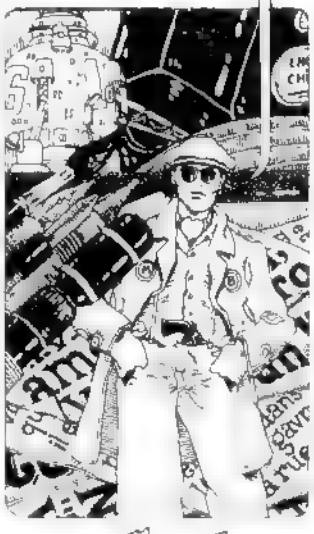
LOST



YES S R, MR EDITOR-IN CHIEF, SIR, I KNOW, M A LITTLE LATE, BUT.. WAIT! WHAT'S THAT? SMELLS LIKE BURNING METAL...

NO, I'M NOT TRYING TO CHANGE THE SUBJECT

WHAT A STRANGE AND CURIOUS UNIVERSE ! THE VEGETATION'S QUITE BIZARRE, UNUSUAL AND QUITE UNREALISTIC



BUT BUT JUST A SECOND. WHAT'S GOING ON?

NOW, LISTEN, IF THOSE PAGES AREN'T ON MY DESK TOMORROW, YOUR ASS IS GRASS UNDERSTAND, PLIMMY?

GOOD GRIEF! A MONSTER!

OW! MY HAND! MY HAND!

WHAT ABOUT YOUR HAND?

THERE'S A LITTLE MARTIAN HERE, SHOOTING AT ME! MY HANDS ALL BLOODY AA!!EE!

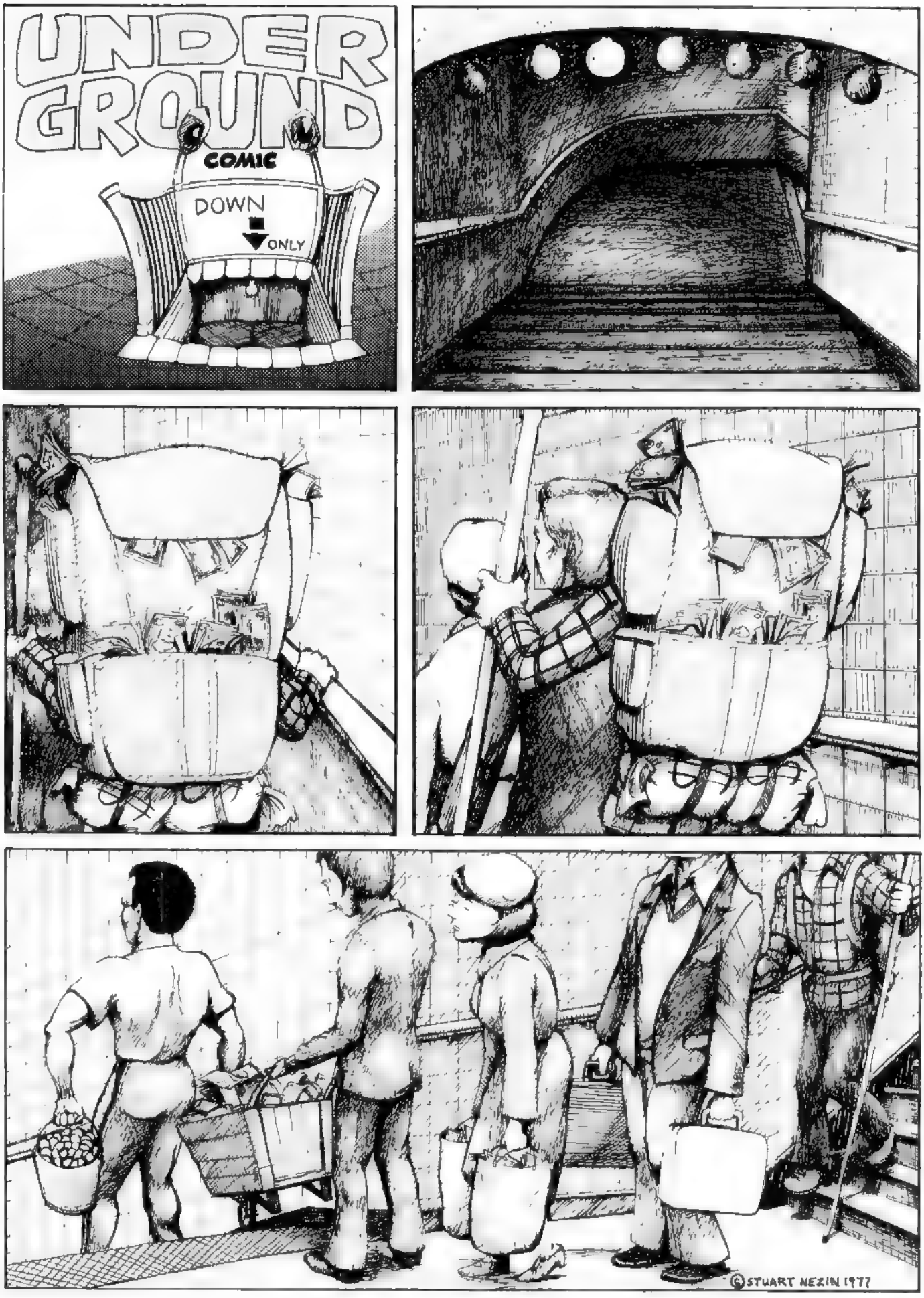
WHAT LITTLE MARTIAN? LISTEN, JUST BECAUSE YOU'RE WORKING FOR A SCIENCE FICTION MAGAZINE, THAT'S NO REASON TO EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE..

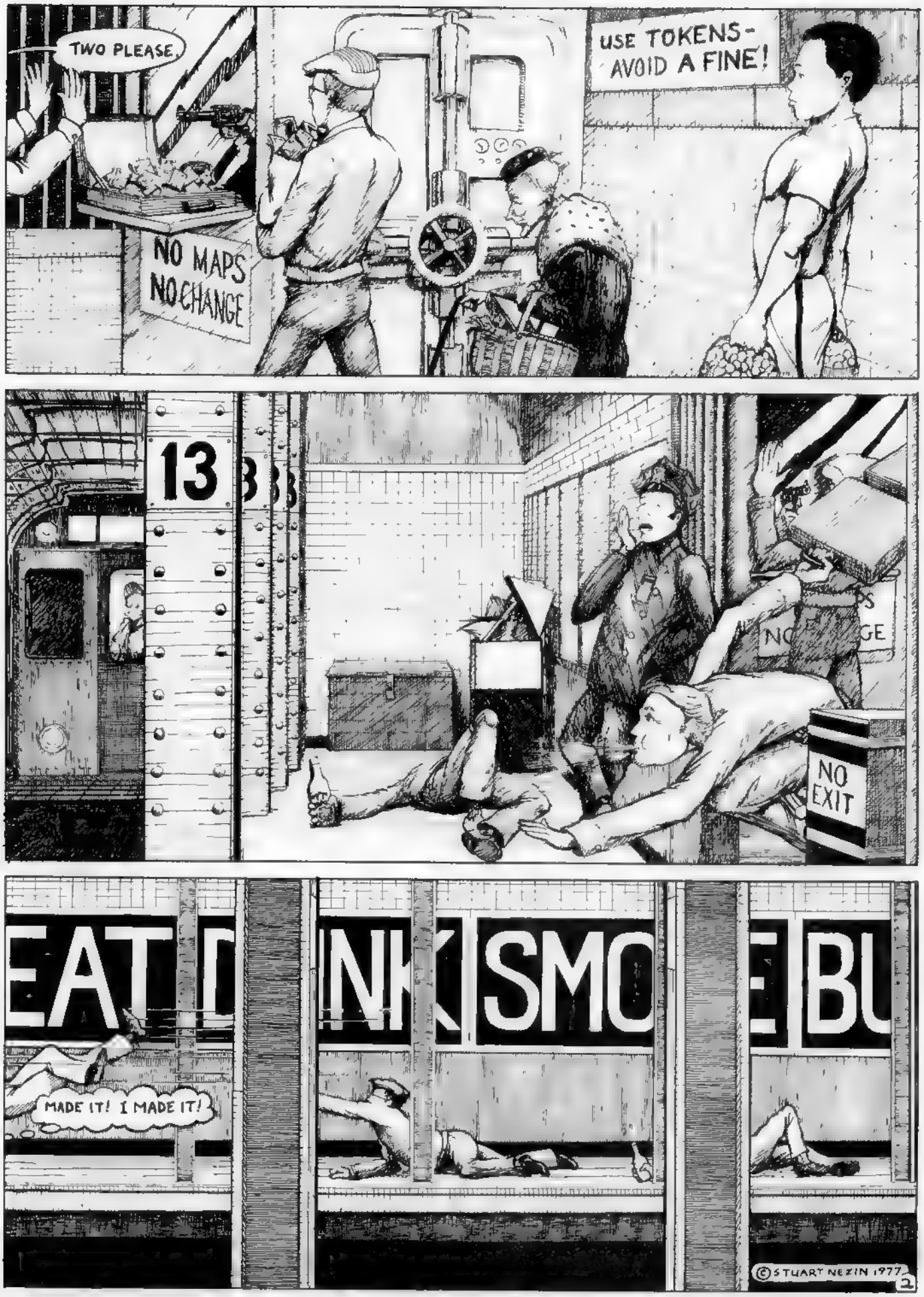
NO, I'M TELLING YOU THERE'S A LITTLE SPACEMAN ON MY DRAWING BOARD, AND

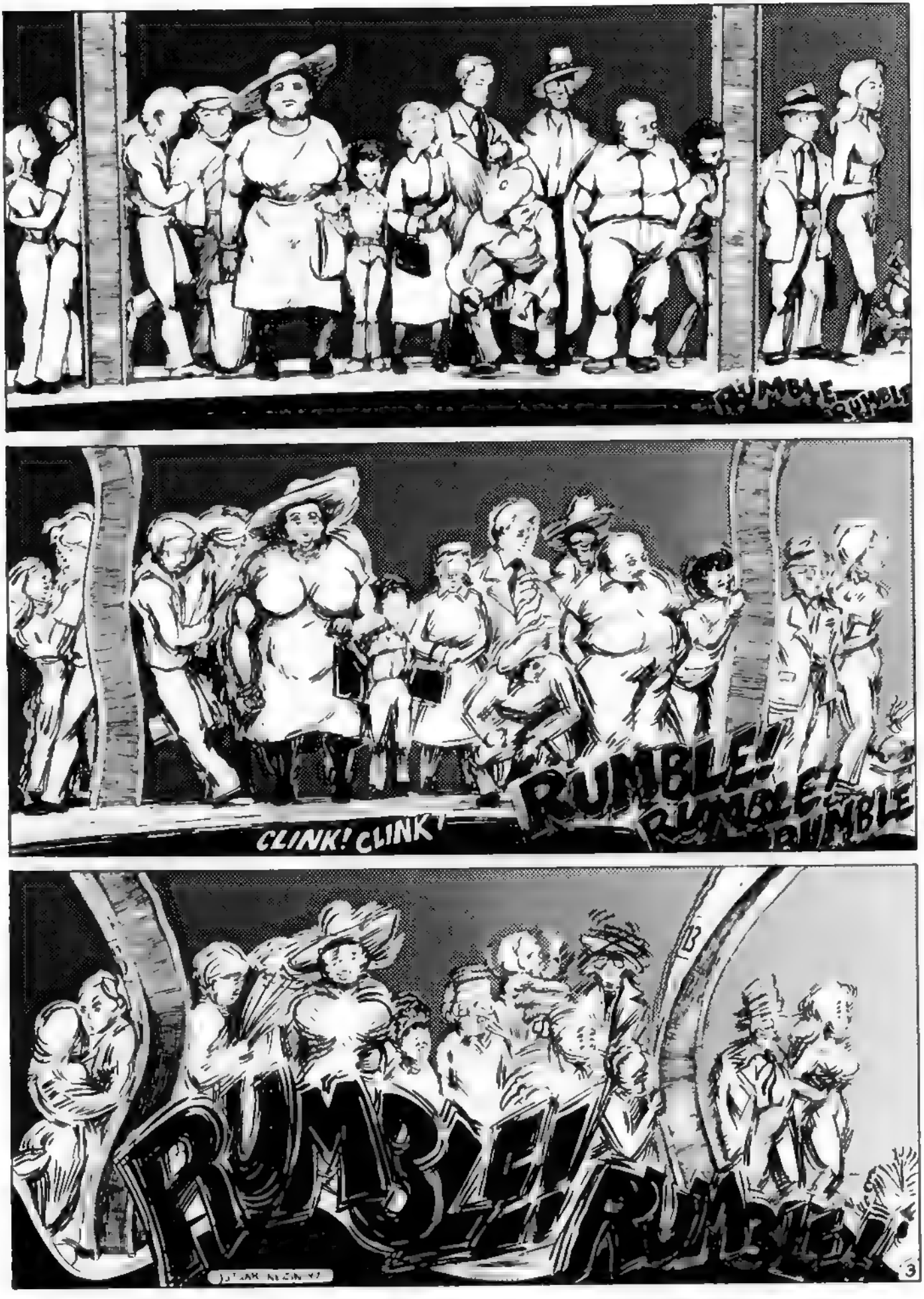
THAT'S A PRETTY PATHETIC EXCUSE FOR BEING LATE WITH THOSE BOARDS NOW, I'M TELLING YOU, I WANT TO SEE THEM TOMORROW, OR ELSE ! A MARTIAN SURE

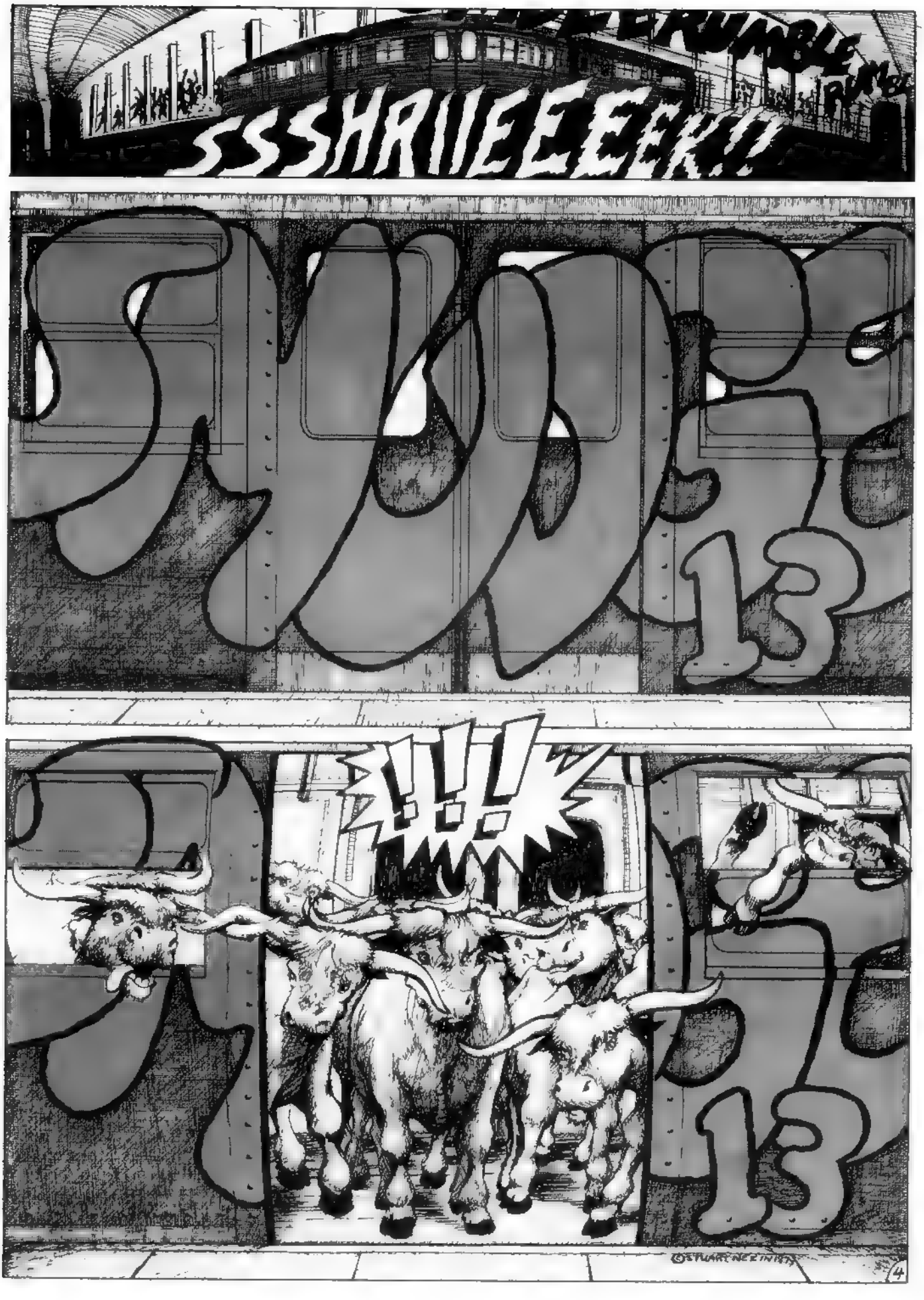
LET'S GET OUT OF HERE ! THIS PLACE IS NUTS!

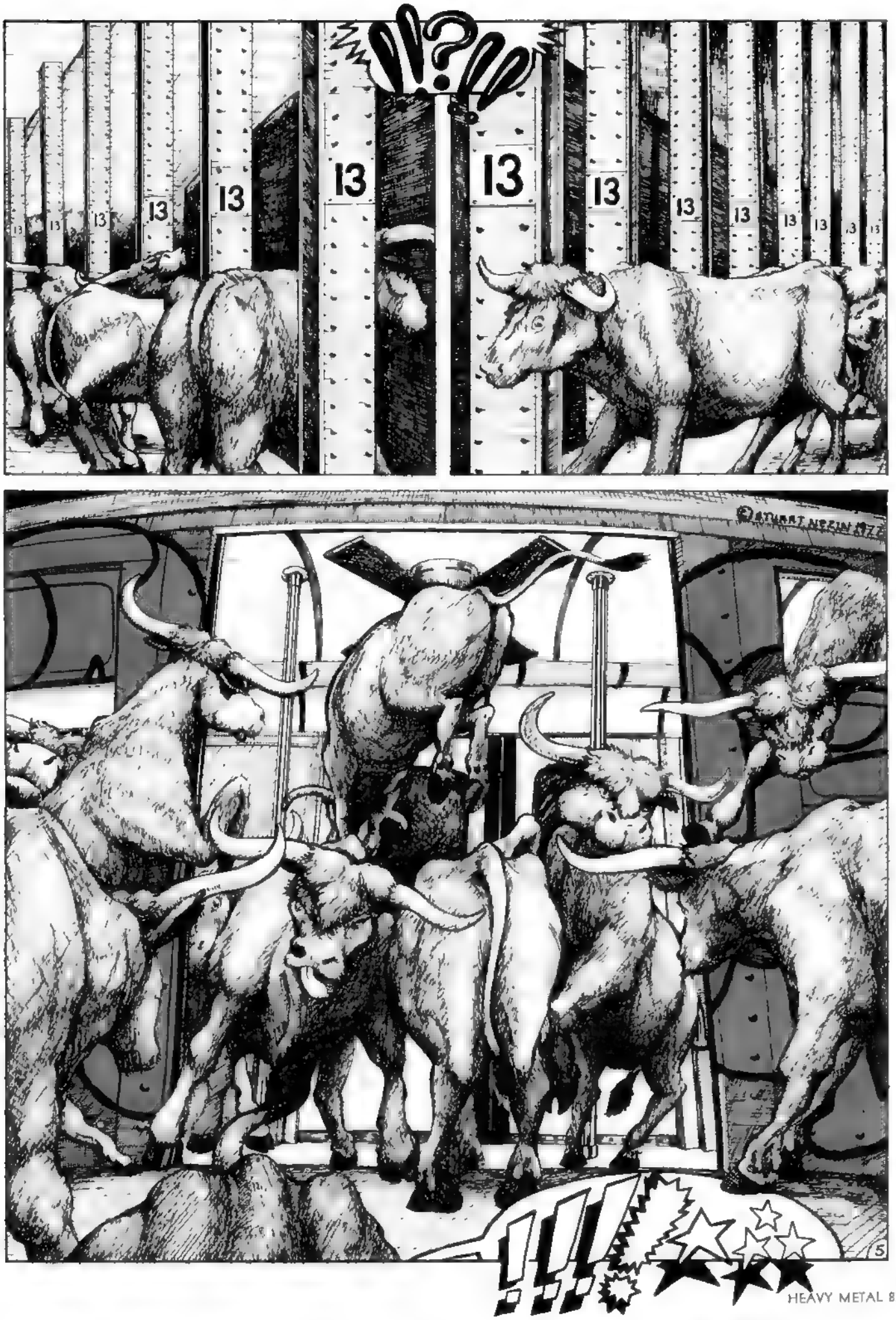
STORY AND ART - JEAN LOUIS TRIP


UNDER
GROUND
COMIC
DOWN
ONLY
©STUART NEZIN 1977


TWO PLEASE.
NO MAPS NO CHANGE
USE TOKENS - AVOID A FINE!
13
NO EXIT
MADE IT! I MADE IT!
©STUART NEZIN 1977
2


RUMBLE
CLINK! CLINK!
RUMBLE!
RUMBLE!
RUMBLE!
RUMBLE!
3


SSSHRIIEEEEK!!
13
13
13
4


!?!
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13
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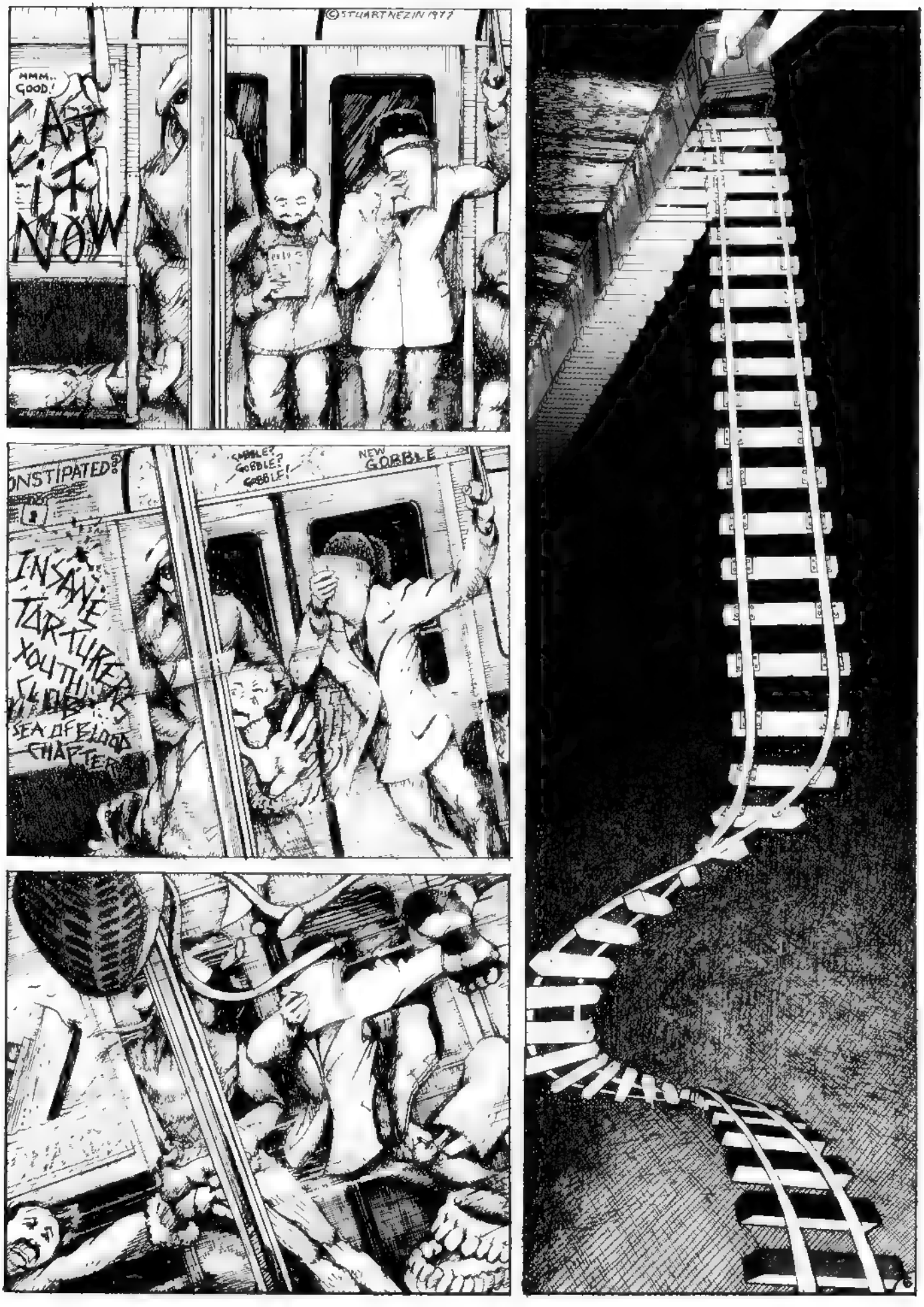
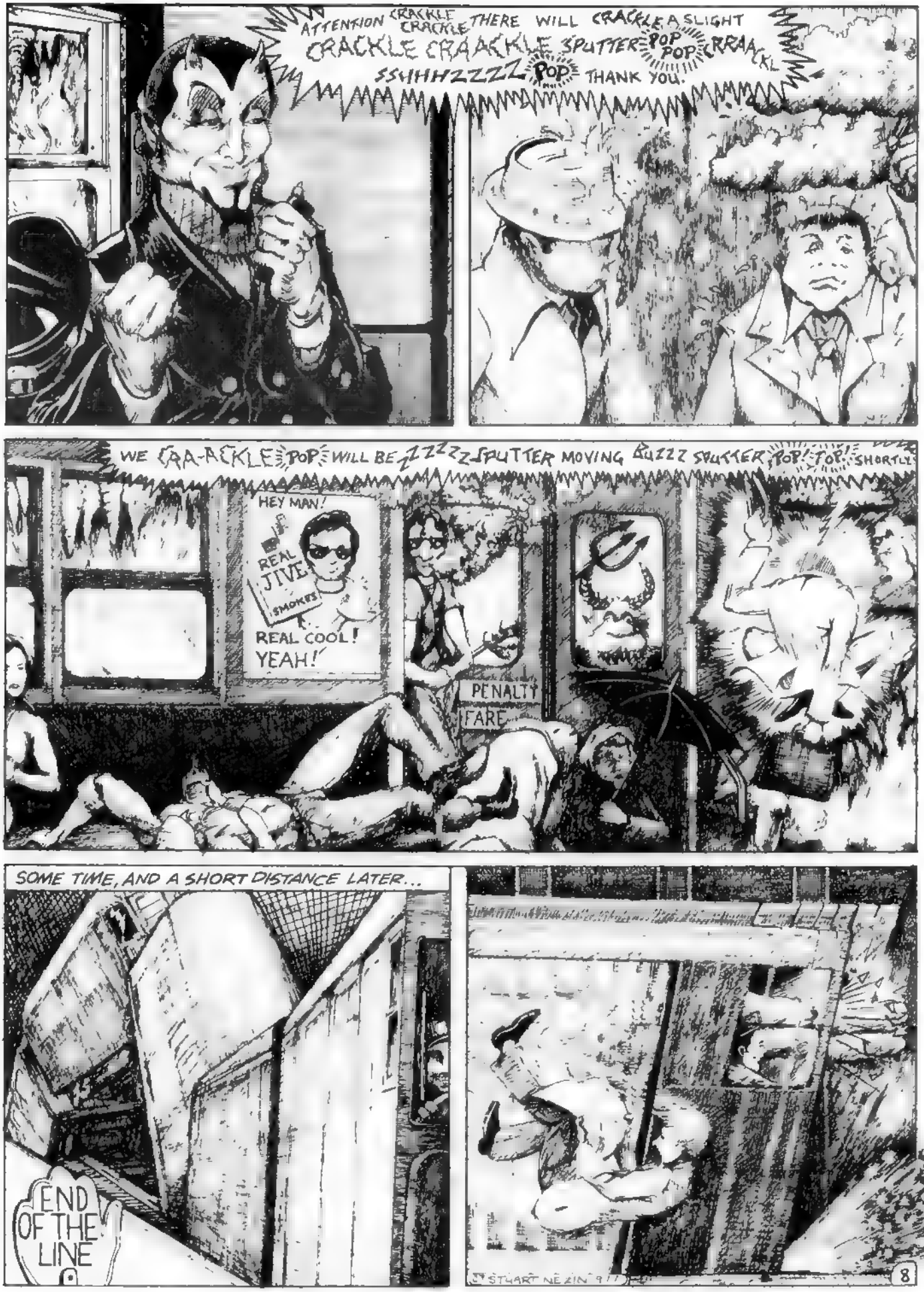
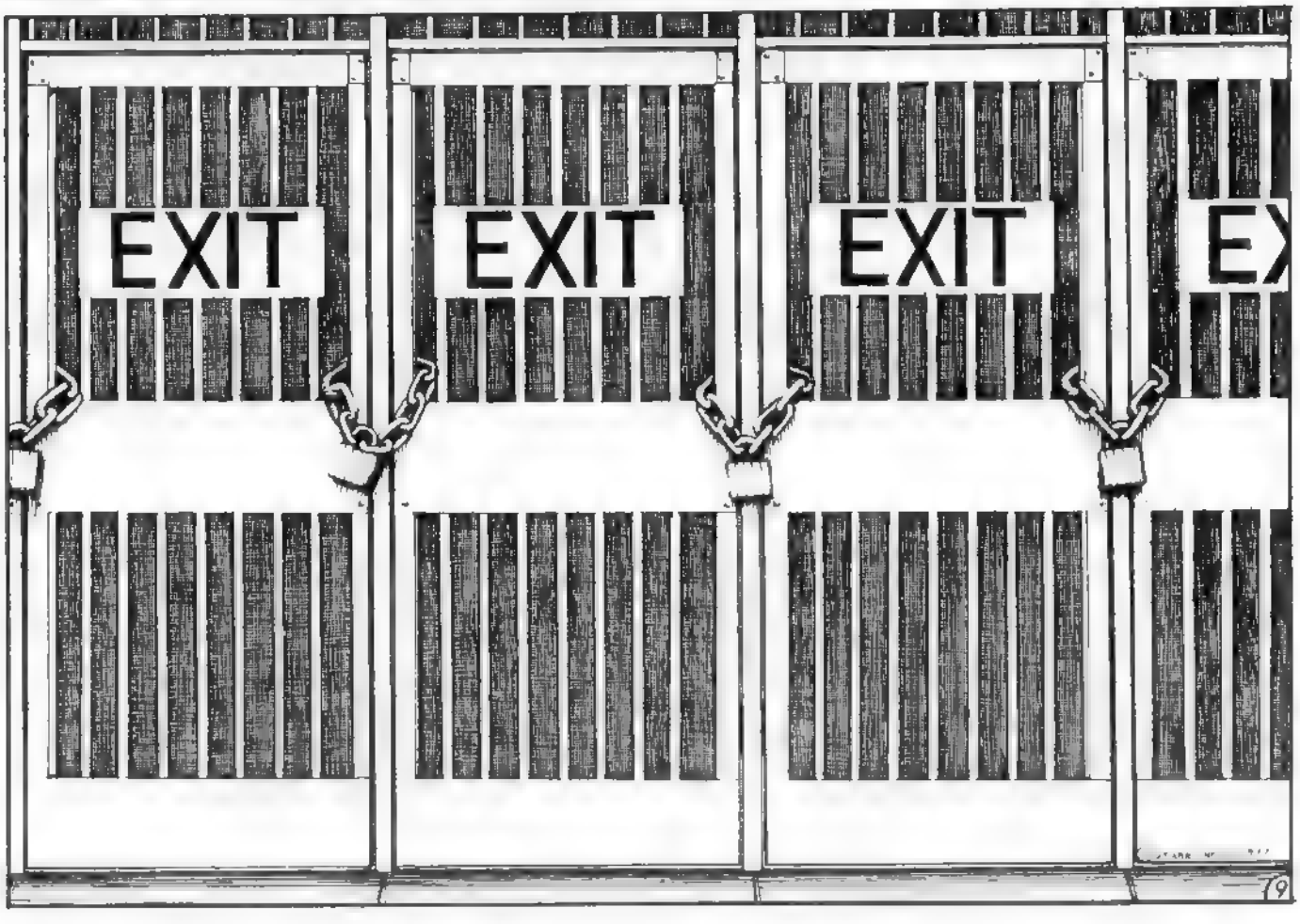

©STUART NEZIN 1977
HMM.. GOOD!
EAT IT NOW
CONSTIPATED?
GOBBLE? GOBBLE? GOBBLE!
NEW GOBBLE
INSANE TORTURE
SEA OF BLOOD
CHAPTER

PLEASE, TAKE MY SEAT.
MUMBLE MUMBLE... MUMBLE
A SEAT! A SEAT!
HAH!
A SEAT!!
BOOP PA DOOP!!
©STUART GIBSON 1977
AWWW

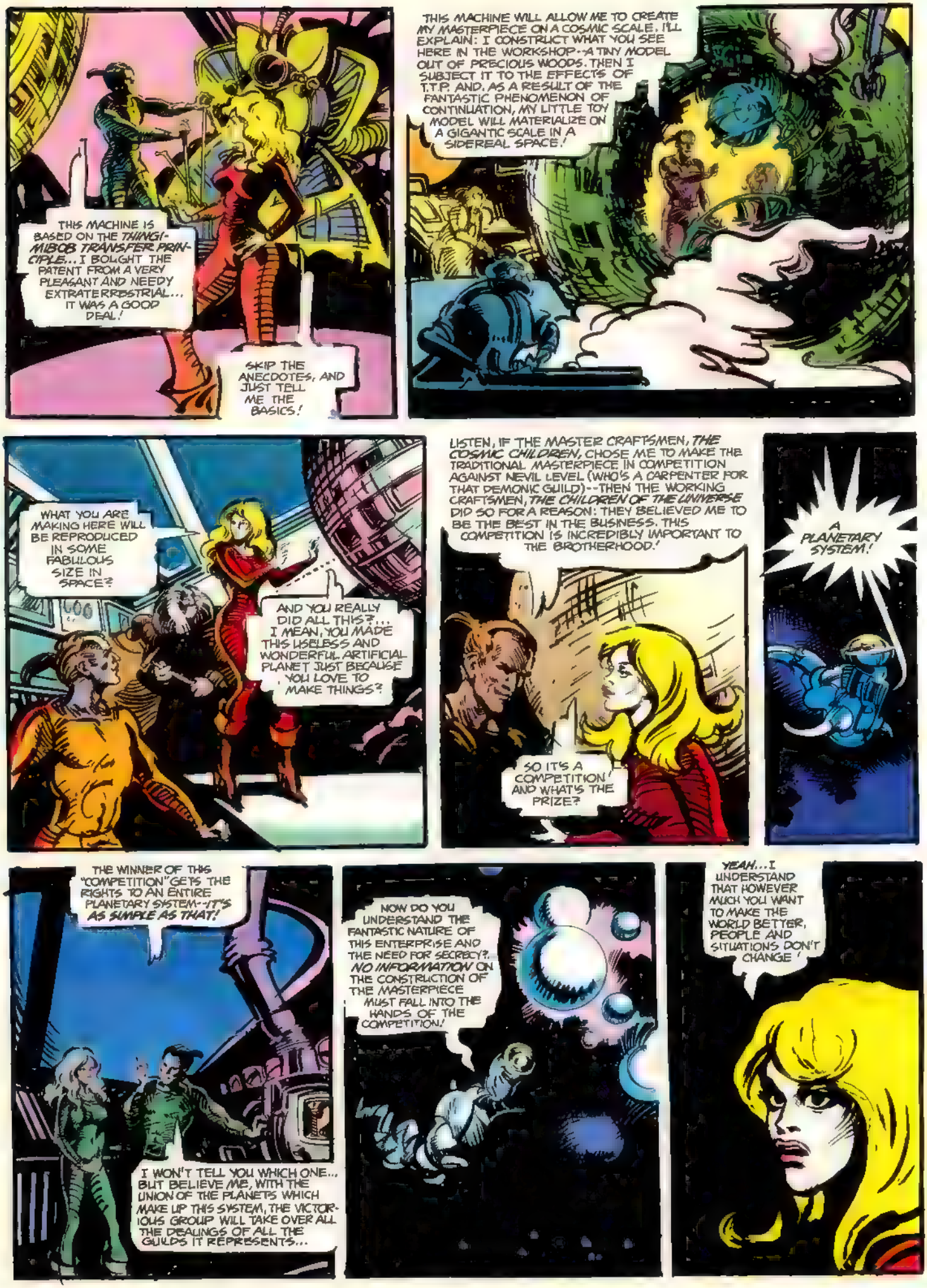

ATTENTION CRACKLE CRACKLE THERE WILL CRACKLE A SLIGHT
CRACKLE CRAACKLE SPUTTER POP POP CRRAACKL
SSHHHZZZZ POP THANK YOU.
WE CRA-ACKLE POP WILL BE ZZZZZ SPUTTER MOVING BUZZZ SPUTTER POP! POP! SHORTLY
HEY MAN!
REAL JIVE
SMOKES
REAL COOL! YEAH!
PENALTY FARE
SOME TIME, AND A SHORT DISTANCE LATER...
END OF THE LINE
STUART NEZIN 9?
8

NO EXIT
NO EXIT
NO EXIT
NO EXIT
NO EXIT


EXIT
EXIT
EXIT
EX

BARBARELLA

MEANWHILE, BACK IN THE LAB, WHERE BARBARELLA AND BROWNINGWELL APPEAR TO BE STILL SLEEPING..
DR BUGGER-BUSS, WASN'T IT YOUR IDEA TO SEND BARBARELLA INTO BROWNINGWELL'S DREAMS?
NOW, WAIT ..IT WAS MY IDEA TO BRING THEM TOGETHER IN THE SAME TRANCE LIKE STATE, AND YOU KNOW WHY..IT WAS A CONTROLLED ENVIRONMENT WHERE THERE WAS NO CHANCE OF ANYTHING MISFIRING OR GETTING AWAY FROM US'
BUT THEY MUST HAVE FOUND SOME WAY TO ESCAPE'
..AND NOW THOSE TWO HYPOCRITES ARE ONLY PRETENDING TO BE THERE, YET I WOULD HAVE BET MY LIFE ON IT.'
GENTLEMEN, IT'S LATE...I BID YOU A GOOD NIGHT.. AND DON'T FORGET TO SHUT THE DOOR BEHIND YOU'
WHILE FAR, VERY FAR AWAY..
I AGREE TO GO ALL THE WAY WITH YOU, BROWNINGWELL, ON ONE CONDITION THAT THERE'S A LITTLE LESS MYSTERY BETWEEN US..WHY IS YOUR MASTERPIECE SUCH A SECRET, AND WHY ALL THIS CARRYING ON— THE FAKE SLEEP AND SO ON?
BARBARELLA, I'M WILLING TO EXPLAIN A CERTAIN NUMBER OF THINGS TO YOU, BUT I'M CONCERNED ABOUT OUR BEING SAFE FROM SECURITY LEAKS...WE'LL BE BETTER OFF AFTER WE CHANGE UNIVERSES..
PARALLEL UNIVERSE NO. 1000 WILL DO VERY NICELY.. I'VE ALREADY CHOSEN P.U. 1000 AS THE COSMIC BASE WHERE I SHALL MAKE MY MASTERPIECE.
DO YOU CHANGE UNIVERSES OFTEN?
OFTEN ENOUGH.' I HAD SOME TROUBLE IN P.U. 600...IT WAS AN UNSTABLE UNIVERSE. .MANY MONTHS' WORTH OF WORK WAS UTTERLY DESTROYED...AND I FOUND MYSELF DISPERSED PHYSICALLY THROUGHOUT MANY UNIVERSES...THE MOST STUNNED OF MYSELVES WAS RETRIEVED BY DR BUGGER BUSS ...DO YOU UNDERSTAND, NOW?
I COULD SAY YES, BUT IT WOULD BE JUST TO SEEM INTERESTED.. ACTUALLY, THE MASTERPIECE, THE COSMIC BASE, ALL THESE MISSING UNIVERSES DON'T MEAN ANYTHING TO ME!...I SUPPOSE I TRIED TO TELL PEOPLE ABOUT ALL THIS-- YOU THINK ANYONE WOULD BELIEVE ME?
I'M NOT GOING TO TELL YOU EVERYTHING RIGHT AWAY, BARBARELLA-- THAT WOULD BE TOO DANGEROUS...FOR YOU AS WELL AS FOR ME BUT I'LL MAKE A FEW THINGS CLEARER TO YOU LET'S GO TO MY WORKSHOP...
THIS MASTERPIECE ISN'T MUCH... NOT MUCH, REALLY...
OH NOW YOU'RE BEING TOO MODEST..
I MEAN WHAT YOU SEE HERE IS ONLY A SCALE MODEL.. THE REAL MASTERPIECE IS ELSEWHERE IN SPACE. AND A MILLION TIMES LARGER THAN THIS'

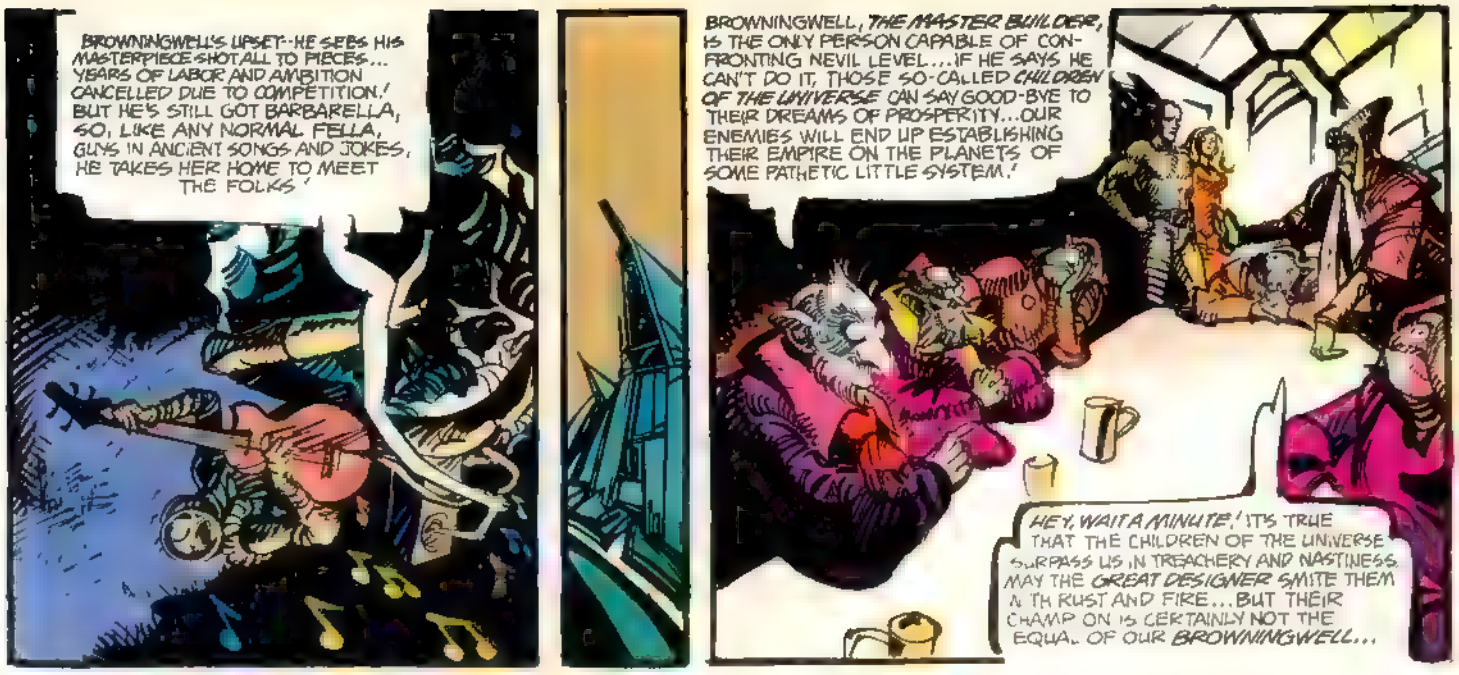

THIS MACHINE IS BASED ON THE THINGI-MIBOB TRANSFER PRINCIPLE... I BOUGHT THE PATENT FROM A VERY PLEASANT AND NEEDY EXTRATERRESTRIAL... IT WAS A GOOD DEAL!
SKIP THE ANECDOTES, AND JUST TELL ME THE BASICS!
THIS MACHINE WILL ALLOW ME TO CREATE MY MASTERPIECE ON A COSMIC SCALE. I'LL EXPLAIN: I CONSTRUCT WHAT YOU SEE HERE IN THE WORKSHOP--A TINY MODEL OUT OF PRECIOUS WOODS. THEN I SUBJECT IT TO THE EFFECTS OF T.T.P. AND, AS A RESULT OF THE FANTASTIC PHENOMENON OF CONTINUATION, MY LITTLE TOY MODEL WILL MATERIALIZE ON A GIGANTIC SCALE IN A SIDEREAL SPACE!
WHAT YOU ARE MAKING HERE WILL BE REPRODUCED IN SOME FABULOUS SIZE IN SPACE?
AND YOU REALLY DID ALL THIS?... I MEAN, YOU MADE THIS USELESS AND WONDERFUL ARTIFICIAL PLANET JUST BECAUSE YOU LOVE TO MAKE THINGS?
LISTEN, IF THE MASTER CRAFTSMEN, THE COSMIC CHILDREN, CHOSE ME TO MAKE THE TRADITIONAL MASTERPIECE IN COMPETITION AGAINST NEVIL LEVEL (WHO'S A CARPENTER FOR THAT DEMONIC GUILD)--THEN THE WORKING CRAFTSMEN, THE CHILDREN OF THE UNIVERSE DID SO FOR A REASON: THEY BELIEVED ME TO BE THE BEST IN THE BUSINESS. THIS COMPETITION IS INCREDIBLY IMPORTANT TO THE BROTHERHOOD.
SO IT'S A COMPETITION! AND WHAT'S THE PRIZE?
A PLANETARY SYSTEM!
THE WINNER OF THIS "COMPETITION" GETS THE RIGHTS TO AN ENTIRE PLANETARY SYSTEM--IT'S AS SIMPLE AS THAT!
I WON'T TELL YOU WHICH ONE... BUT BELIEVE ME, WITH THE UNION OF THE PLANETS WHICH MAKE UP THIS SYSTEM, THE VICTORIOUS GROUP WILL TAKE OVER ALL THE DEALINGS OF ALL THE GUILDS IT REPRESENTS...
NOW DO YOU UNDERSTAND THE FANTASTIC NATURE OF THIS ENTERPRISE AND THE NEED FOR SECRECY?. NO INFORMATION ON THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE MASTERPIECE MUST FALL INTO THE HANDS OF THE COMPETITION!
YEAH... I UNDERSTAND THAT HOWEVER MUCH YOU WANT TO MAKE THE WORLD BETTER, PEOPLE AND SITUATIONS DON'T CHANGE!

DR. BUGGER-BUSS AND HIS ASSISTANTS WANT TO WAKE YOU UP BECAUSE THEY THINK YOU'RE HIDING A TREASURE IN YOUR CLEVER LITTLE HEAD...
...WHILE YOU AND YOUR BUDDIES MAKE COSMIC MASTER-PIECES, WHOSE SOLE PURPOSE IS TO GIVE SOME MAFIA A NEW COMMERCIAL EMPIRE..
AND WHERE DO I FIT INTO ALL THIS?
I'VE KNOWN FOR A LONG TIME WHAT KIND OF MONEYGRUBBERS WANT TO CONTROL THE WORLD THROUGH MASS MEDIA--BY OWNING ALL THE MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, AND TV STATIONS. AND THIS SECRET PLAN OF YOURS TO CREATE A COSMIC MASTERPIECE ISN'T ANY BETTER!
BARBARELLA WILL NEVER GET INVOLVED IN YOUR DIRTY DEALS, UNDERSTAND?
SHUT UP! WE'RE APPROACHING THE SATELLITE...THE ARTIFICIAL PLANET WHICH I PROJECTED HERE THIS MORNING, AS BRIGHT AS THE GREATEST OF STARS ...AH! IF NEVIL LEVEL COULD ONLY SEE IT ..
...BUT HE WOULD NEVER DREAM OF COMING TO LOOK FOR ME ON P.U. 1000!
HEY! IS THAT ASTRONAUT DOWN THERE A FRIEND OF YOURS?
IT SURE LOOKS TO ME AS IF HE'S HAVING FUN PRANGING YOUR MASTER-PIECE!
CURSES! HE'S SPOTTED ME!
I THOUGHT EVERYTHING WAS GOING TO BE SO PEACEFUL ON PARALLEL UNIVERSE 1000?
HOW NAIVE COULD I BE? I NEVER IMAGINED THAT MY ADVERSARIES WOULD TURN UP AND FIND ME HERE!
SO, IS NEVIL LEVEL THE PILOT OF THAT THING?
IF THAT'S NOT HIM, IT'S HIS BROTHER AN ASTRONAUT NAMED CHARLIE CHISEL, A TOOL OF OUR ENEMY, THE WORKING CRAFTS-MEN--ALSO KNOWN AS THE CHILDREN OF THE UNIVERSE!

SO, BROWNINGWELL, THIS IS THE SO-CALLED CODE OF HONOR AND LOYALTY AMONG THE WORKERS OF THE UNIVERSE?
WHAT A STUPID THING TO SAY, BARBARELLA! WITH SO MUCH AT STAKE, YOU'VE GOT TO EXPECT SOME ROTTEN STUNTS... WHICH DOESN'T MEAN I HAVE TO LIKE IT... IN FACT, IT MAKES ME DAMN MAD!...
SO NOW YOU'RE DAMN MAD, ARE YOU?
I'M STARTING TO BE.. FOLLOW ME... I'LL TRY MY SECRET TRICK...IT'S NEVER FAILED ME YET.'
I ALREADY EXPLAINED THE WORKINGS OF THIS VERSION OF THE THING/MIBOB TRANSFER PRINCIPLE... THE MACHINE THAT ALLOWS ME TO PROJECT MY TOY MODEL INTO SPACE AND REPRODUCE IT ON A GIGANTIC SCALE... BUT DIDN'T I TELL YOU EVERYTHING... ITS ACTION CAN ALSO WORK THE OTHER WAY AROUND!...
YOU MEAN TO SAY THAT YOU CAN CAPTURE AND BRING RIGHT INTO YOUR SHIP WHATEVER GETS CAUGHT IN THE T.T.P. FIELD?
EVERYTHING FOUND IN SPACE CAN BE REPRODUCED HERE, THANKS TO T.T.P.... IN OR ON A SMALLER SCALE,
AMUSINGLY ENOUGH!
THEN EVERYTHING DESTROYED IN SPACE CAN ALSO BE DESTROYED HERE!
ALAS! BARBARELLA, WHEN THE DESTRUCTION OF A FULL SPATIAL VERSION BY THE MASTERPIECE TAKES EFFECT, THE DAMAGE IS IRREPARABLE, AND THERE IS NO POSSIBILITY OF SAVING THE ORIGINAL MODEL... LET'S GO! CLEAR THE FIELD! SO MUCH FOR VANDALS!
IT'S CHARLIE CHISEL! YOU'VE CAPTURED HIM!
HEY, BROWNINGWELL! IT'S GETTING PRETTY NOISY IN THERE! AND THEY'RE STILL DESTROYING YOUR MASTERPIECE... WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO WITH YOUR MACHINE NOW?
DON'T WORRY! THE T.T.P. IS STILL WORKING! AND THEY CAN'T GET OUT OF ITS MAGNETIC FIELD...
REALLY? THEN WHAT'S THAT?
CURSES! QUICK! SHUT THE DOOR!
ALERT! THIS IS BROWNINGWELL! SHUT THE AIRTIGHT COMPARTMENTS AND ISOLATE STAGE 6...
IF HE KEEPS THAT UP, HE'LL PIERCE THE WALLS AND MAKE YOUR SPACESHIP LOOK LIKE A PIECE OF SWISS CHEESE...

OUT OF THE WAY, EVERYONE, I'M GOING TO SHOOT THAT OVERSIZED PIGEON!
WELL?
BELIEVE ME— THIS WEAPON'LL DROP ANYTHING. IT'S SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO DESTROY ALL HUMAN LIFE, EVEN THROUGH THE THICKEST POSSIBLE ARMOR!
YOU'VE GOT TO BE KIDDING!
LEAVE ME ALONE TO THINK'..CHARLIE CHISEL, IN THIS SMALL MODEL, IS NOTHING BUT A REPLICA A SPECTRAL DOUBLE. WITH A WEAK COEFFICIENT OF REALITY, WHICH MAKES HIM SLIGHTLY VULNERABLE...
...WE HAVE TO ATTACK THE ORIGINAL. THE ONE IN SPACE!
THERE'S ONE THING I DON'T UNDERSTAND'.
JUST ONE?
LET'S START WITH THIS ONE! WHY DOESN'T CHARLIE CHISEL, THE REAL ONE, I MEAN, THE ONE IN SPACE, FLY AWAY, NOW THAT HE'S DONE HIS THING?
BECAUSE HIS REPLICA IS A PRISONER ON OUR SHIP, IN WHICH SPACE AND TIME ARE INDEPENDENT OF EXTERIOR TIME AND SPACE.. AND AS FEEBLE AS THE COEFFICIENT OF REALITY OF THAT REPLICA MIGHT BE, IT'S ENOUGH TO TRAP THE ORIGINAL ASTRONAUT IN OUR UNIVERSE UNDERSTAND?
NO!
HEY! LOOK! IT'S CHARLIE CHISEL!...HE'S CRASHING INTO EVERYTHING... THE GUYS INSIDE MUST BE REALLY MAD!
HARRY, WE'VE GOT TO FINISH HIM OFF!... PREPARE TO FIRE THE KILLER TORP!
IT'S ALREADY DONE, MASTER!
PERFECT! TAKE THE FIELD, HEAVE HO, AND PASS THE AMMUNITION....I'M GOING TO BLAST THAT CHARLIE CHISEL... IT'S A PLEASURE I WOULDN'T LET ANYONE ELSE ENJOY!
OH, BROMMING— WELL, BE CAREFUL!

FULL SPEED AHEAD, HARRY, FULL SPEED! GIVE IT ALL YOU'VE GOT! GET READY TO SHOOT THE WORKS!
READY TO SHOOT THE WORKS!
RIGHT. SHOOT THE WORKS!
HEY!
BROWN... BROWNINGWELL, D...DO SOMETHING!
HOLD TIGHT! WE'VE GOT HIM IN THE BAG!
HA! HA! HE WASN'T EXPECTING MY SHIP TO BE EQUIPPED WITH A MASTOCRACK!... MY TORP IS COMPLETELY PROTECTED BY ANTI-MATTER, SO MY SWORD CAN SLICE THROUGH TIME AND SPACE, TO SMASH THE WHOLE DAMN UNIVERSE!
TAKE THAT!
WHAT'S GOING ON? CHARLIE CHISEL'S DISAPPEARED... THERE'S JUST SOME KIND OF JAM LEFT...
MY MASTOCRACK BLEW HIM OUT OF P.U. 1000 ...AND CAST HIM AWAY IN THE INFINITE WORLD OF ANTI-WORLDS...
OH, MY POOR BROWNINGWELL, YOUR MASTERPIECE HAS BEEN SERIOUSLY KNOCKED AROUND BY YOUR ENEMIES... HOW MANY LIGHT YEARS WILL IT TAKE YOU TO FIX IT UP?
WELL, AT THIS POINT IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO REPAIR IT COMPLETELY, BARBARELLA... BETTER TO START OVER AGAIN! BUT NEVIL LEVEL HAS SUCH A HEAD START ON ME NOW THAT IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO CATCH UP...
WHAT A SHAME!
WHAT DO YOU PLAN TO DO?
TO GET BACK TO WILLIAM IV, THE FLOATING PLANET, AS SOON AS POSSIBLE--THAT'S WHERE THE COSMIC CHILDREN ARE GATHERED... THERE, YOU CAN SEE IT ALREADY, BECAUSE FOR THE LAST SPATIAL HOUR WE'VE BEEN TRAVELING OUTSIDE THE TIME-SPACE NEXUS, SO WE'VE TAKEN A KIND OF SHORTCUT TO IT.


BROWNINGWELL'S UPSET--HE SEES HIS MASTERPIECE SHOT ALL TO PIECES... YEARS OF LABOR AND AMBITION CANCELLED DUE TO COMPETITION.' BUT HE'S STILL GOT BARBARELLA, SO, LIKE ANY NORMAL FELLA, GUYS IN ANCIENT SONGS AND JOKES, HE TAKES HER HOME TO MEET THE FOLKS'
BROWNINGWELL, THE MASTER BUILDER, IS THE ONLY PERSON CAPABLE OF CONFRONTING NEVIL LEVEL... IF HE SAYS HE CAN'T DO IT, THOSE SO-CALLED CHILDREN OF THE UNIVERSE CAN SAY GOOD-BYE TO THEIR DREAMS OF PROSPERITY... OUR ENEMIES WILL END UP ESTABLISHING THEIR EMPIRE ON THE PLANETS OF SOME PATHETIC LITTLE SYSTEM.'
HEY, WAIT A MINUTE.' IT'S TRUE THAT THE CHILDREN OF THE UNIVERSE SURPASS US IN TREACHERY AND NASTINESS. MAY THE GREAT DESIGNER SMITE THEM WITH RUST AND FIRE... BUT THEIR CHAMPION IS CERTAINLY NOT THE EQUAL OF OUR BROWNINGWELL...

DON'T PANIC, COMRADES... MY INFORMERS ASSURE ME THAT NEVIL LEVEL IS ONLY A LITTLE AHEAD OF US NOW. THE PLAN FOR HIS MASTERPIECE IS REALLY TOO AMBITIOUS, AND HAS PRESENTED HIM WITH CONSIDERABLE TECHNICAL PROBLEMS.
THAT'S TRUE... SO MAYBE BROWNINGWELL CAN START ALL OVER AGAIN AND BRING IT OFF IN THE END.

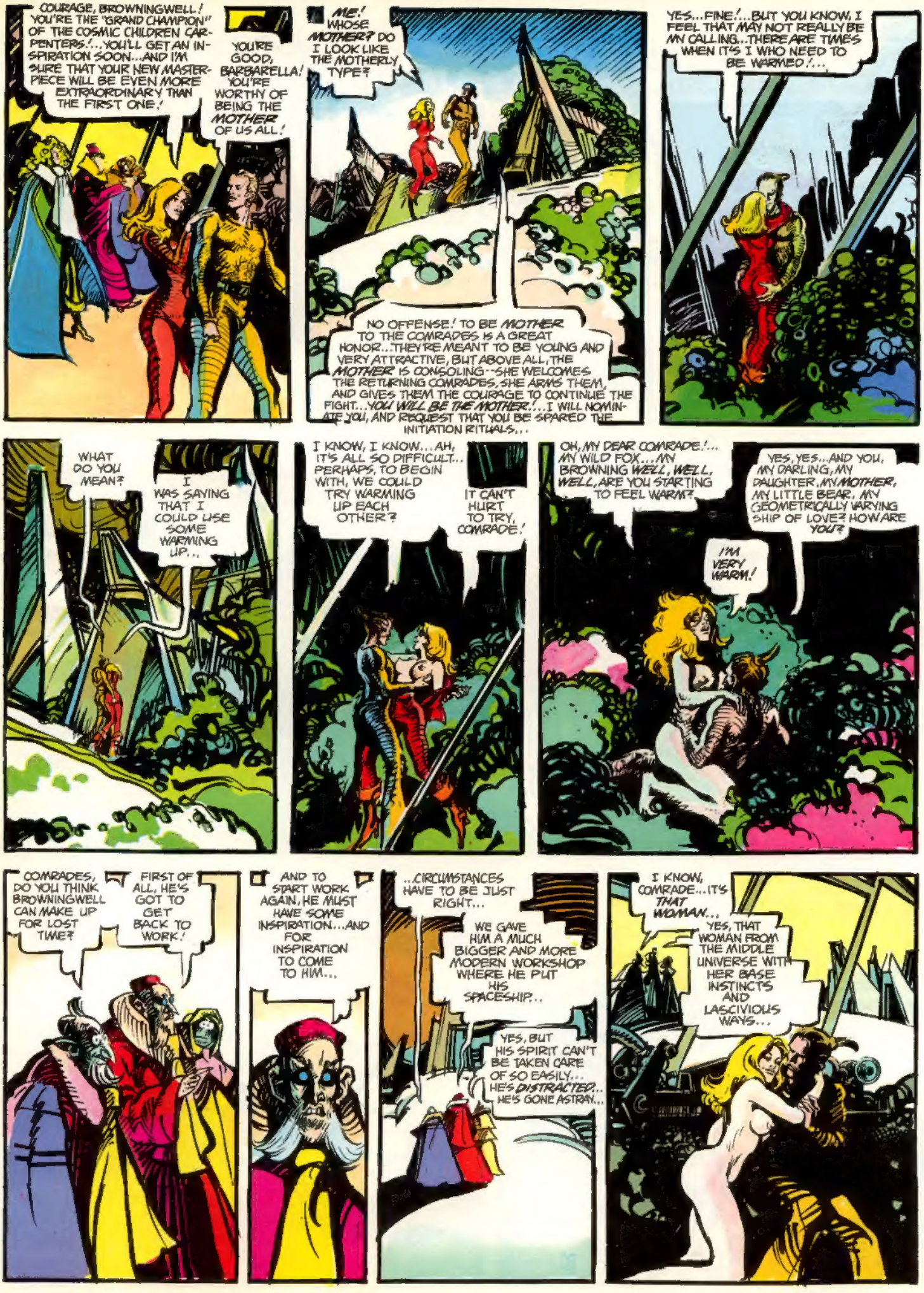
BAH' I DON'T WANT TO WORK ANYMORE. I NEED ANOTHER IDEA.. SOME WONDERFUL NEW IDEA TO GIVE ME THE COURAGE TO TAKE UP THE FIGHT AGAIN

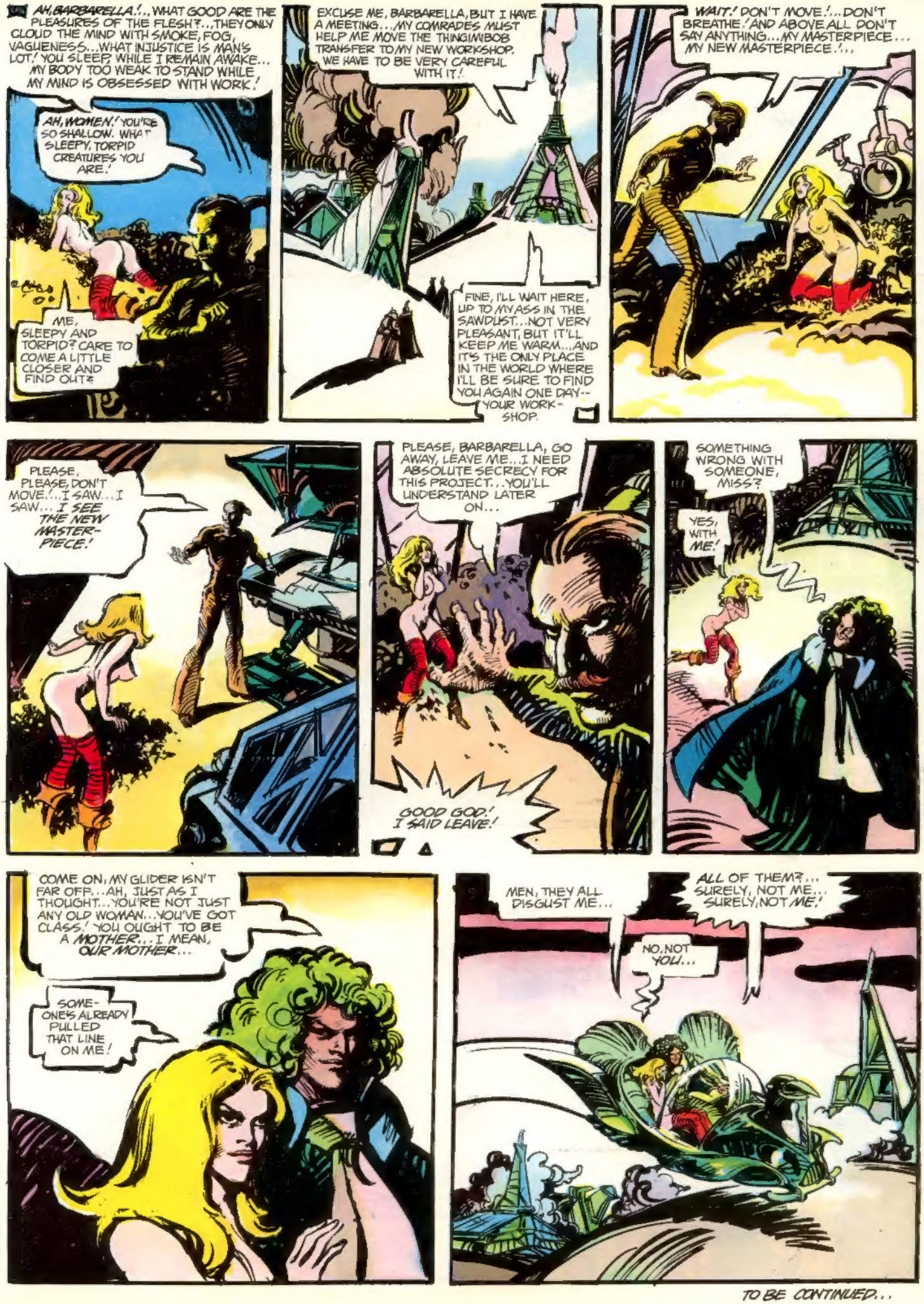
A WONDERFUL IDEA WOULD BE MOST WELCOME... FOR I, TOO, HAVE INFORMATION ABOUT NEVIL LEVEL'S MASTERPIECE... IT'S TRUE THAT HE'S NOT TOO FAR AHEAD, BUT THERE'S NO POINT CRITICIZING HIS PROJECT. CERTAIN PEOPLE MIGHT ONLY SEE MEGALOMANIAC DESIRE IN IT BUT I AT LEAST CAN RECOGNIZE GRANDEUR AND GENIUS'

THE COMRADE OF THE GREAT ART IS RIGHT. SHOULD NEVIL LEVEL SUCCEED, HIS MASTERPIECE WILL BE MORE THAN AN EXERCISE IN STYLE--IT WILL BE ONE OF THE SEVEN WONDERS OF THE UNIVERSE'

HE'S CERTAINLY LETTING THEM HAVE IT. BUT WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT, COMRADE?
ABOUT A CATHEDRAL-BANK!... A STRONGBOX OF A PLANET, MADE OF GLAZED EBONY.. A WOOD HARDER THAN.. THAN A GIRL'S HEAD'

WHAT KIND OF THING IS THAT TO SAY?
SORRY, IT'S JUST AN EXPRESSION WE USE AROUND HERE.


COURAGE, BROWNINGWELL! YOU'RE THE "GRAND CHAMPION" OF THE COSMIC CHILDREN CARPENTERS!...YOU'LL GET AN INSPIRATION SOON...AND I'M SURE THAT YOUR NEW MASTERPIECE WILL BE EVEN MORE EXTRAORDINARY THAN THE FIRST ONE!
YOU'RE GOOD, BARBARELLA! YOU'RE WORTHY OF BEING THE MOTHER OF US ALL!
ME! WHOSE MOTHER? DO I LOOK LIKE THE MOTHERLY TYPE?
NO OFFENSE! TO BE MOTHER TO THE COMRADES IS A GREAT HONOR...THEY'RE MEANT TO BE YOUNG AND VERY ATTRACTIVE, BUT ABOVE ALL, THE MOTHER IS CONSOLING--SHE WELCOMES THE RETURNING COMRADES, SHE ARMS THEM, AND GIVES THEM THE COURAGE TO CONTINUE THE FIGHT...YOU WILL BE THE MOTHER!...I WILL NOMINATE YOU, AND REQUEST THAT YOU BE SPARED THE INITIATION RITUALS...
YES...FINE!...BUT YOU KNOW, I FEEL THAT MAY NOT REALLY BE MY CALLING...THERE ARE TIMES WHEN IT'S I WHO NEED TO BE WARMED!...
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
I WAS SAYING THAT I COULD USE SOME WARMING UP...
I KNOW, I KNOW...AH, IT'S ALL SO DIFFICULT... PERHAPS, TO BEGIN WITH, WE COULD TRY WARMING UP EACH OTHER?
IT CAN'T HURT TO TRY, COMRADE!
OH, MY DEAR COMRADE!... MY WILD FOX...MY BROWNING WELL, WELL, WELL, ARE YOU STARTING TO FEEL WARM?
I'M VERY WARM!
YES, YES...AND YOU, MY DARLING, MY DAUGHTER, MY MOTHER, MY LITTLE BEAR, MY GEOMETRICALLY VARYING SHIP OF LOVE? HOW ARE YOU?
COMRADES, DO YOU THINK BROWNINGWELL CAN MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME?
FIRST OF ALL, HE'S GOT TO GET BACK TO WORK!
AND TO START WORK AGAIN, HE MUST HAVE SOME INSPIRATION...AND FOR INSPIRATION TO COME TO HIM...
..CIRCUMSTANCES HAVE TO BE JUST RIGHT...
WE GAVE HIM A MUCH BIGGER AND MORE MODERN WORKSHOP WHERE HE PUT HIS SPACESHIP...
YES, BUT HIS SPIRIT CAN'T BE TAKEN CARE OF SO EASILY... HE'S DISTRACTED... HE'S GONE ASTRAY...
I KNOW, COMRADE...IT'S THAT WOMAN...
YES, THAT WOMAN FROM THE MIDDLE UNIVERSE WITH HER BASE INSTINCTS AND LASCIVIOUS WAYS...


AH, BARBARELLA!... WHAT GOOD ARE THE PLEASURES OF THE FLESH?... THEY ONLY CLOUD THE MIND WITH SMOKE, FOG, VAGUENESS... WHAT INJUSTICE IS MAN'S LOT! YOU SLEEP, WHILE I REMAIN AWAKE... MY BODY TOO WEAK TO STAND WHILE MY MIND IS OBSESSED WITH WORK!
AH, WOMEN! YOU'RE SO SHALLOW. WHAT SLEEPY, TORPID CREATURES YOU ARE!
ME, SLEEPY AND TORPID? CARE TO COME A LITTLE CLOSER AND FIND OUT?
EXCUSE ME, BARBARELLA, BUT I HAVE A MEETING... MY COMRADES MUST HELP ME MOVE THE THINGIMBOB TRANSFER TO MY NEW WORKSHOP. WE HAVE TO BE VERY CAREFUL WITH IT!
FINE, I'LL WAIT HERE, UP TO MY ASS IN THE SAWDUST... NOT VERY PLEASANT, BUT IT'LL KEEP ME WARM... AND IT'S THE ONLY PLACE IN THE WORLD WHERE I'LL BE SURE TO FIND YOU AGAIN ONE DAY-- YOUR WORK-SHOP.
WAIT! DON'T MOVE!... DON'T BREATHE! AND ABOVE ALL DON'T SAY ANYTHING... MY MASTERPIECE... MY NEW MASTERPIECE!...
PLEASE, PLEASE, DON'T MOVE!... I SAW... I SAW... I SEE THE NEW MASTER-PIECE!
PLEASE, BARBARELLA, GO AWAY, LEAVE ME... I NEED ABSOLUTE SECRECY FOR THIS PROJECT... YOU'LL UNDERSTAND LATER ON...
GOOD GOD! I SAID LEAVE!
SOMETHING WRONG WITH SOMEONE, MISS?
YES, WITH ME!
COME ON, MY GLIDER ISN'T FAR OFF... AH, JUST AS I THOUGHT... YOU'RE NOT JUST ANY OLD WOMAN... YOU'VE GOT CLASS! YOU OUGHT TO BE A MOTHER... I MEAN, OUR MOTHER...
SOME-ONE'S ALREADY PULLED THAT LINE ON ME!
MEN, THEY ALL DISGUST ME...
ALL OF THEM?... SURELY, NOT ME... SURELY, NOT ME!
NO, NOT YOU...
TO BE CONTINUED...

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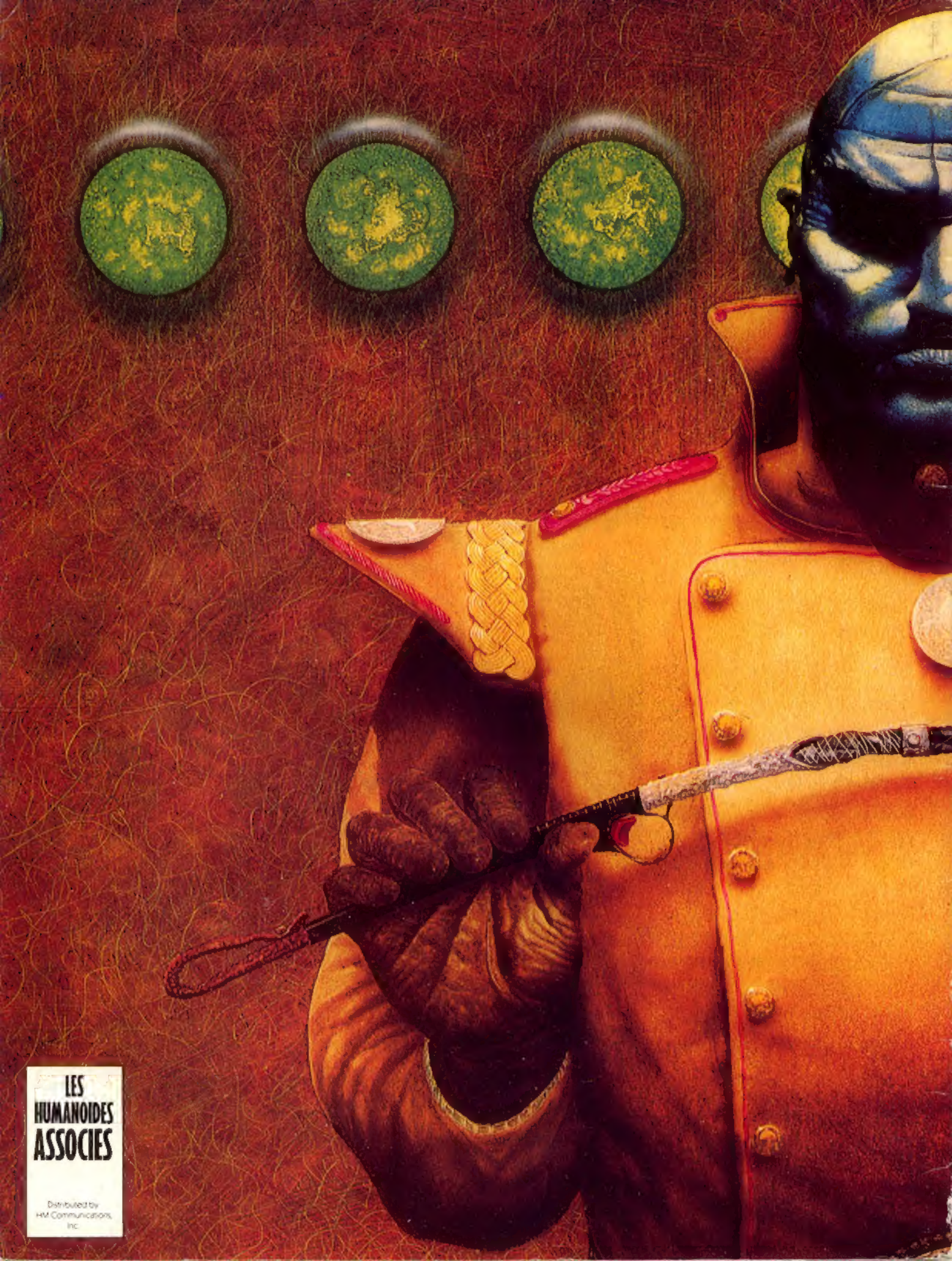

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